HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS OF NEW ENGLAND

CLIFTON JOHNSON

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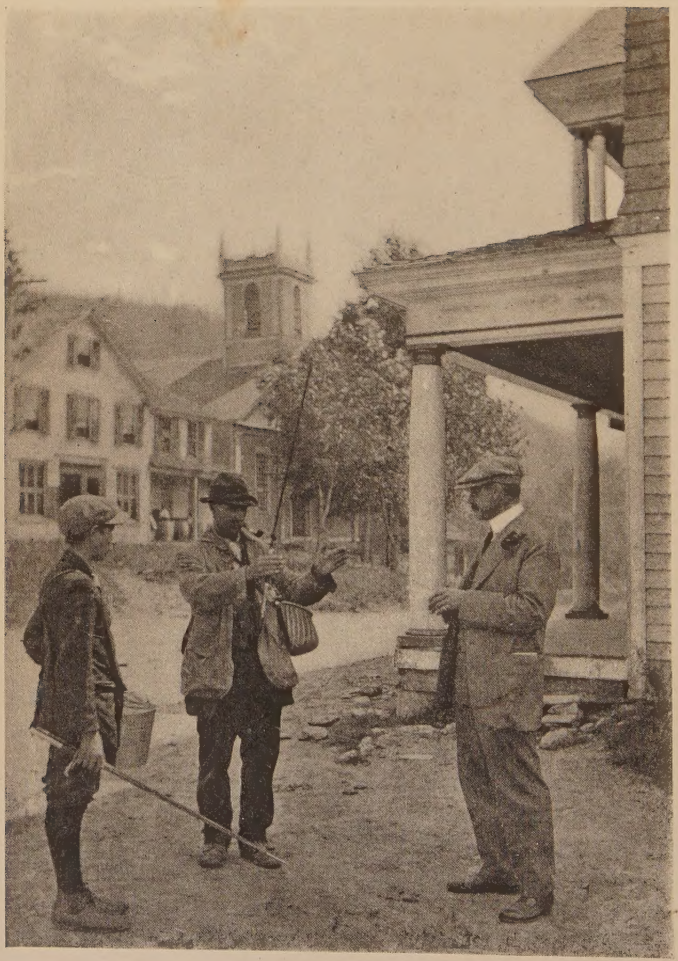

The fish story

HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS
OF
NEW ENGLAND

INCLUDING THE STATES OF
MASSACHUSETTS
NEW HAMPSHIRE
RHODE ISLAND
CONNECTICUT
VERMONT
AND
MAINE

WRITTEN AND
ILLUSTRATED BY
CLIFTON JOHNSON

Published by THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
New York *MCMXXI*
LONDON: MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED

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Set up and electrotyped
Published November, 1915

AMERICAN
HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

NEW ENGLAND

Electrotyped
by the
F. A. Bassette Company
Springfield, Mass.

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Introductory Note

All the volumes in this series are chiefly concerned with country life, especially that which is typical and picturesque. To the traveller, no life is more interesting, and yet there is none with which it is so difficult to get into close and unconventional contact. Ordinarily, we catch only casual glimpses. For this reason I have wandered much on rural byways, and lodged most of the time at village hotels or in rustic homes. My trips have taken me to many characteristic and famous regions; but always, both in text and pictures, I have tried to show actual life and nature and to convey some of the pleasure I experienced in my intimate acquaintance with the people.

These "Highways and Byways" volumes are often consulted by persons who are planning pleasure tours. To make the books more helpful for this purpose each chapter has a note appended containing suggestions for intending travellers. With the aid of these notes, I think the reader can readily decide what regions are likely to prove particularly worth visiting, and will know how to see such regions with the most comfort and facility.

CLIFTON JOHNSON.

Hadley, Mass.

THIS volume includes chapters on characteristic, picturesque, and historically attractive regions in the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. The notes appended to the chapters give valuable information concerning automobile routes and many facts and suggestions of interest to tourists in general.

Highways and Byways of New England

I

IN THE MAINE WOODS

THE lumbermen have been devastating the forest country around Moosehead Lake for a hundred years, yet much of it is still genuine wilderness. Its solitudes are frequented by big game, the streams are full of fish, and the lakes abound with waterfowl. Here and there a few faint trails wind through the forest, most of them of little use except in winter; and the rivers and lakes are the chief thoroughfares, just as they were in the days of the first explorers. Even the aborigines are not altogether lacking, for a remnant of the once powerful Penobscot tribe has survived, and some of its members continue to resort to the woods to hunt and fish and act as guides.

The four hundred persons who constitute this Indian tribe have permanent dwellings on the borders of the wilderness at Oldtown, where they occupy an island in the river. Access to their domains is obtained by a

lumberman's bateau rowed by a swarthy Indian ferryman. The island is two miles long, and the land rises and falls in little hills and hollows that are for the most part well covered with trees. It seems like a bit of Eden to one who has come from the busy streets and noisy waterside mills of Oldtown. The Indian homes are set helter-skelter in a somewhat close group at the southern end of the island. Among them is a public hall, a schoolhouse, and a good-sized church, but there are no streets or roads—only paths. Many of the dwellings are little one-story cabins. Others are large and substantial, yet always with a touch of dilapidation or incompleteness as if the owners had not the knack of carrying a project through to the end, or of retaining in good order what they once gain. The most imposing house of all at the time of my visit had a fine granite underpinning, maroon paint, and an ornate front door, but this door lacked a handle, and there were no steps to mount to it. Roofs were apt to be leaky, fences broken, and the few tiny garden patches were overflowing with weeds, while the occasional fruit trees were wholly unpruned and dying of neglect. Everywhere were signs of shiftless easy-going poverty, and the people loitered about chatting or dreaming.

The state looks after them as its wards and controls their property, which includes considerable rentable land, and they have an annual income from this source that averages twenty dollars to each member of the tribe. Some of the money is reserved to care for the

poor, and the rest is doled out in the form of orders for supplies. But these orders are often sold to the whites for half their face value, and the cash thus obtained is most likely spent for liquor. The sale of strong drink to the Indians is unlawful, but there is always a low grade of whites who will take the Indians' money, invest it in fire-water for them, and then help drink the stuff.

None of the Indians are now full-blooded. They have intermarried somewhat promiscuously with the whites—men of the French and Irish races being apparently the most inclined to take squaw brides.

"As a class the Indians are unreliable," a local resident informed me. "They attend their church pretty well, but it don't hold them down very much. They pick up things when they have a chance, and they never pay a debt. If one of 'em owed me, and he saw me comin', I'd expect him to sneak around through a back street. Another thing—you take an Indian in a tight place, or scrapping, and he's cowardly—don't show any sand. They ain't got the ambition of white men and won't work as hard. Very few of 'em can be depended on for steady exertion. When an Indian works long enough to earn a few dollars he no sooner gets his pay than he lays off to spend it. They take no thought for the morrow, and if they have something for supper they don't care whether they have any breakfast or not.

"The old race was better than those of the present.

There used to be a cannon on the island that they fired when the village men who'd been logging came down the river with the drive in the spring, but they hain't got the energy to do that now. They're bright enough, and there's some who go to college, but such don't fare any better'n the rest. The college fellow ain't been brought up to work, and he soon dissipates and goes to pieces.

"Yes, an Indian's an Indian; but I'll say this for them —they've never had a fair show anywheres. Oldtown used to be an awful rough place, and woe betide the Indian who got in a little too much booze. It would make him pretty wild, and the lumbermen would 'Hurrah boys!' and gather a crowd and almost massacree him. Every one knows too that the whites' treatment of the Indian girls wa'n't what it ought to be. Some of 'em was handsome as pictures. If a man tried to be familiar with 'em while they were sober they'd fly in his hair in a minute; but they were an easy prey when they were drunk. They have, if anything, more of an appetite for liquor than the men, and two-thirds of the women on the island now have served time in jail for drunkenness."

The tragic element in the Indian story did not present itself as I rambled about their village. Life there seemed to be particularly placid, and I found the inhabitants companionable and apparently contented. One of the men related with evident relish how a woman with a camera stopped to make a picture of him while

he was digging potatoes, and he said he asked her if she didn't know it was against the law to shoot wild animals at that season in Maine.

From Oldtown I went by train to the southern end of Moosehead Lake, whence I journeyed to the other end, a distance of forty miles, in a little steamer. Many forest fires were burning, for the season had been unusually dry, and the air was thick with smoke. The sun shone dimly through the haze from a cloudless sky, and as the steamer pushed onward, the land between the green points that we were constantly passing receded into a vague and silvery distance.

Our journey ended toward evening at a clearing in which were a small hotel and a store. Here I engaged a guide, Pete by name, and, with him to advise, bought supplies at the store for a week's canoe trip. The trip was to begin on a stream two miles away across a "carry." Pete agreed to hire a team and get his canoe and the supplies over the first thing in the morning, but I walked across that night. The road was rough and wholly strange to me, yet it was clear of timber for several rods on either side and, in spite of the moonless gloom, I had no difficulty in following it.

As I trudged along I presently observed a peculiar glow over the landscape, and when I looked up to discover the cause saw that the heavens were all ablaze with a wonderfully brilliant aurora. Splinters of light, some single, some gathered in great sheaves, were pulsating weirdly across the sky; and there were long

streamers that now and then formed in a luminous, cloudy nucleus right overhead with plumes extending away in all directions, faintly colored with tints of the rainbow, and alternately flashing and fading. What a wild shimmering dance! and so silent! I unconsciously listened for a crash of sound, but heard nothing except a slight noise of dusky wings as an occasional bat sped past me in its erratic flight.

At a farmhouse near the river I found lodging for the night. Two men were sitting on the piazza smoking their pipes and watching the aurora. "I've never seen the northern lights like this, covering the whole sky," one of them commented. "I bet a dollar it means something—either storm or cold."

After we had discussed the noiseless celestial fireworks for a while the other man said to me: "Your walk across the carry would have been kind of dangerous a few weeks later. As soon as the law is off on deer there's the darndest rush of sports in here that ever you see, all wantin' to hunt, and so excited they don't know what they're doin'. They gather around the borders of the clearings waiting for the deer to come out to feed, and if they get sight of anything movin' they take for granted that it's game and shoot in a hurry. So in the late evening or early morning, when the light is dim, if you git anywhere near 'em, they most likely plunk you. Ain't that right Steve?"

"Yes," Steve agreed. "Why, you know one time last year how Bob Eddy was behind a rock in the field

where we cut hay. He was watchin' for a chance at a deer, and so were some sports who were crawlin' around in the bushes on the edge of the woods. Pretty soon he heard a bullet sing past, and later a second and a third. Then he sensed what was the matter and he looked and saw the fellow who was shooting. Bob was mad clear through, and he jumped up and began swearing. He told the sport he had half a mind to put a bullet in him, and the sport took to his heels.

"It's lucky that the sports are poor shots, for though they kill quite a number of men every year it's only a very few compared with those that are shot at. They get nervous and their bullets fly half a mile wide of the mark as like as not. But bullets ain't the only danger here. Bill, tell about that close call you had a couple of years ago down at the river."

"Well," Bill said, "it was late in the fall and the river was skimmed over with thin ice. I got into my canoe and was breaking my way across, and it happened there was an old fellow standing on the other bank watching me. Then all of a sudden I fell in. I couldn't do much but cling to the ice and prevent my head from goin' under. The old fellow on the shore got a boat and started to my rescue hollerin': 'Keep cool, keep cool! I'm comin'!'

"It was no trouble to keep cool in that ice-water, and by the time he pulled me out I was so cool that in about another minute I'd have lost my grip."

At the conclusion of this narrative we went indoors,

and Steve took a lamp and picked up from behind the hall door a cap and a cob pipe. "Those belonged to our fire warden," he said. "We found 'em in the river near where he was drowned four or five days ago. He and his wife were out in a canoe and they upset. In her fright she grabbed him around the neck and so kept herself above water until he sank. At the same time she was screaming, and their nephew who was hunting in the woods close by ran to see what was the trouble. He swam out into the stream, but he was foxy and wouldn't go right to her; for he was slim and light while she was a big heavy woman, and he knew if she got hold of him they'd both drown. So he swam to the canoe and swung it around to her. She caught the end of it, and he pushed her to shore. Then he went and dove after his uncle, but couldn't get him. He and his aunt came home, and she was most crazy. She said she had caused her husband's death, and she cried till her face was black as the stove. They've moved away now, but they lived in a little house just a few rods down the road."

In the morning the air was crisp and clear and entirely free from smoke. However, Bill said this was merely because the wind had changed and that the forest fires still burned. "We don't have as bad fires as we used to have," he continued. "I remember one forty years ago, by gorry! that climbed the spruce trees like a race-horse. It was a damnable sight—and when there come a gust of wind—Lord! how that fire would

go! But I sot a back fire along a road and kept it away from our place.

"Another fire that I recollect got goin' in some timber land where there wa'n't a stick but pine of the very finest kind. The owner of the land was at our house when it started. He watched the black smoke rollin' up and offered to give Father a barrel of flour if he'd put the fire out. Then he went off, and Father and four of us boys took some pails and was on our way to see if we could deaden the fire by throwing on water when a thunderstorm come along and did the business. Next day Father hitched up and drove to the town where the man that offered him the flour had a store. The feller was a drefful mean critter, and he declared he wa'n't goin' to pay for what the rain had done. But his partner said: 'Let the man have the flour. He did what he could, and if God Almighty helped him you no need to complain.' "

I remarked that I had come to the woods prepared for cold, rough weather, but that the present prospects were so bright and mild I thought I had made a mistake. "Oh, no," he responded, "a wise man takes his coat and umbrella whether the weather is favorable or not. Any fool knows enough to take 'em if it's bad. You'll have a nice trip; but a month ago it was all a man's life was worth to go into the woods on account of the mosquitoes and flies."

My guide arrived about the time I finished breakfast, and we were soon afloat on the stream—a lonely,

sluggish waterway through the interminable forest. The steady dip of the paddles, the ripple of little waves along the sides of the canoe, and the swiftness with which we glided down the stream were all delightful. But the voyaging nevertheless had its flaws, for I presently heard Pete, who sat at the stern, grumbling that he had tipped over the kerosene can, and that his plug of tobacco had dropped into the spillings and tasted of the oil.

By noon, after putting ten miles behind us, we came to a solitary clearing where there was a little cluster of buildings with a garden and a few fenced fields roundabout. "The place belongs to Joe Smith," Pete informed me, "and he runs a sort of hotel. You'd ought to see him. He's got a paunch as big as a molasses barrel."

We concluded to stop at Joe's for dinner, and so I made his acquaintance. He was a vigorous elderly man with bushy white hair, and as rotund as my guide had said, but he was far from having the fat individual's proverbial amiability. Indeed, he was as full of wrath as he could hold and was constantly scolding, and slamming nervously in and out of the house. He told the several persons who had gathered at his dinner table that this was the last day his house would be open to the public.

But his housekeeper said: "Joe is not himself this noon. He will feel differently tomorrow. You needn't mind what he says about closing the house. It will be

open just the same. I ain't no kid, and I'll see to that. But I can tell you I don't like my job. No one in this world has to take the redemption and going-over that a cook does. The trouble at present is caused by some liquor that a sport give him yesterday. Joe had eleven drinks before breakfast."

When we left the dinner table we heard the landlord shouting wrathfully on the piazza. Pete glanced out at him through a window and remarked: "Joe's got a voice like a mad bull. I s'pose he's breakin' the news to those two teamsters he's talkin' with."

At that instant the fat landlord delivered a sudden blow with his fist that knocked one of the teamsters off the piazza and landed him full length on the ground. The man's pipe flew from his mouth, and some money he had in his hand was scattered all around. But he was not hurt and was soon on his feet. Joe stamped and threw a piazza chair onto the woodpile. My guide and I betook ourselves to the canoe, and as we went on we looked back up the hill from the far end of the clearing. Joe was in the yard still bellowing at the teamsters who were standing near a shed, and his big body and white shock of hair loomed on the horizon like a thunder-cloud.

We now came to rapids, and a continual dodging was necessary to keep in the channel and avoid the numerous stones that strewed our course, both those that were in plain sight and those that were slightly submerged. Pete did the navigating alone, here holding

back, here pushing vigorously forward, at times using his paddle, but in the more difficult places a "pick-pole." At last the voyaging became so bad that I got out and walked along near the stream on a grassy tote-road that was used in winter for transporting supplies to the lumber camps. I had the company of a young married couple who had been passengers in a canoe ahead of us. This canoe was propelled by the Chesuncook mail-carrier who travels over a twenty-mile route, going up the river one day and down the next.

As we strolled along, the man, gun in hand, kept a sharp watch for game. Presently he addressed me saying, "Your hearing isn't very good, is it?"

I did not understand the significance of his remark until he went on to say: "You couldn't hear anything, could you, in case I should do some shooting contrary to law? Anyhow, the law's off on ducks, and I'm goin' to shoot if I see one sitting up in a tree, even if it does look like a partridge."

After walking a mile we resumed our canoe voyage in dead-water that sets back from Lake Chesuncook, and the lake itself presently came in sight. The day was now waning, and Pete selected a camping-place on a high bank, where were tentstakes and the charred remains of a fire. In a short time we had our tent up and a cheerful blaze crackling in front. Pete then proceeded to boil potatoes, fry bacon and eggs, and bake biscuit. He did not stint in his use of materials. It was habitual with him to prepare more food than we

could possibly eat and to cheerfully throw away what was left. Why should he economize when the expense was another's? He brought the canoe up the bank and wedged it bottom upward between two trees for a table.

When supper had been disposed of we paddled across the lake to a tiny settlement. By the time we neared the landing the evening gloom had so increased that we could distinguish nothing clearly along the muddy, snag-encumbered shore, and we were vainly trying to find a way to solid ground when some one appeared with a lantern and helped us out of our difficulties. We went with him up to the post office which was a room in the ell of his house, and we were there chatting when we heard shouts from the lake. The postmaster went out again into the night with his lantern. This time he returned with a guide and two young women. The latter were to teach school in the vicinity, one on this side of the lake, and the other in a similar tiny settlement on the opposite shore. They were town girls who had accepted the positions in part, at least, for the pleasure of spending a few months in the woods. Their only way to come and go was by canoe, and their voyage that day had been pretty strenuous. The guide did not know the river and had got his canoe down the rapids by wading. Hardly was he past the worst of the rocks when darkness closed in on them, and they had an anxious time until they saw ahead the lights of the settlement.

Pete and I presently returned to our boat and paddled across to camp. When we went to bed my guide drew the blankets over his head and never removed them till morning. I wondered that he did not smother, but he said he always slept that way—in winter on account of the cold, in summer to escape mosquitoes.

The bruising the canoe had received on the rocks had set it to leaking, and Pete made repairs with paper and shellac. Just before starting he "killed" our fire by pouring water onto the embers so that it could by no chance spread into the woodland. This he did everywhere we built a fire, whether at our night camping-place, or where we stopped for our noon lunch. The precaution was taken not entirely out of regard for the forest, but from a wholesome fear of the wardens, who, if they discovered a neglected campfire of his, even if he had only left it intending to come back in five minutes, would take away his license as a guide and send him out of the woods.

For several miles we journeyed very comfortably up a broad arm of the lake, and the channel came to an abrupt end in a floating tangle of stumps and dead trees. Careful search revealed indications that other boats had crowded and chopped a way through this débris. So, sometimes pausing to use our ax, sometimes standing on the drift and tugging at the canoe, sometimes in the boat pushing along with our paddles we gradually worked our way to a muddy landing. Here was a short carry to a stream called the Umbazookskus. Its name

Ready for game

is the only big thing about it, for it is a mere brook, swift, crooked, and encumbered with boulders. Pete waded and pushed the boat before him while I tramped a trail in the towering unmolested forest. Often the path led through a sober twilight of evergreen woods where tresses of gray moss hung from the dead limbs.

At length we reached Umbazookskus Lake and paddled across it to a clearing in which a summer resident had a log cabin. Another carry was now necessary—this time two miles long, but the owner of the cabin had no desire to have strangers linger on his premises, and for a moderate remuneration he was ready to supply a man and team to facilitate their progress to other regions. The conveyance on which we bestowed ourselves amid our belongings was a heavy logging wagon, and the road was deeply rutted and boggy. At intervals we splashed through pools of water, and there were frequent rocks over which we bumped with a violence calculated to addle one's brains. Now and then, too, we had a jig over a stretch of corduroy.

It was a relief to embark once more, even though we were traversing Mud Pond, which was decidedly more mud than pond; for there was only a skimming of water with black ooze beneath. Through this we pushed by main force, and on arriving at the other shore I resumed walking while Pete waded behind the canoe down a brook that he said had hardly enough water in it to float his pick-pole. But we did not have far to go before reaching a marshy region where the

stream was navigable, and then we paddled along till we came to the broad expanse of Chamberlain Lake. The smoke had come on thick again, and the dim opposite shore seemed twenty miles away.

Pete said it was time to camp, but when I demurred he agreed to push on, though with a reminder that most guides would not be so obliging. In particular he mentioned one of the crack guides and affirmed: "If you had him he'd have stopped at Mud Pond, and you couldn't have got him to go any farther, nohow. But then, Dave is the balkiest man God ever made, and that's a fact."

Another half dozen miles took us to the banks of the Allegash, where we landed and prepared to pitch our tent just as the sun disappeared low in the western smoke.

In the morning the smoke had once more blown off, and the air was keen and clear. When we started on our day's voyaging we turned southward and sped swiftly along urged forward by a gale of wind. Once in a while a little slop of water came over the side of the canoe from the crest of a wave. In our rear the deep indigo of the lake surface dappled with whitecaps and streaked with foam looked positively ugly. The canoe made long leaps down the incline of each successive wave, and the experience was very exhilarating—perhaps the more so for its spice of danger.

About a dozen miles from our starting-point we escaped the worst of the wind by passing through a

broad outlet into little Lake Telosmic, and we kept steadily on until we camped at the far end of Webster Lake for the night.

As I was gathering driftwood for our fire that evening I heard a splashing in the water a quarter of a mile distant, and when I looked in that direction I saw a cow moose standing knee-deep in the lake eating water-weeds. I ran along through the woods near the shore until I came opposite the animal. She was now only a few rods away, yet for a time was quite undisturbed by my presence. At length, however, she seemed to scent me, and threw her ears intently forward and gazed doubtfully toward the shrubbery behind which I was concealed. Then she leisurely swung around, and with many pauses straddled off on her long ungainly legs into the woods. What a caricature she was with her humped back and broad-nosed, big-lipped face!

I saw two other moose during my trip, but their tracks were common along the shores of the streams and lakes—great ox-like imprints, and with them the dainty hoof-marks of the deer. I often had glimpses of the latter creatures—flashes of brown disappearing among the trees, and on the night we spent at Webster Lake I heard a deer close by our camp "blowing." Again and again the wheezing snort was repeated, warning all the other members of the clan of apprehended danger. I lifted the lower border of the tent and looked out. The deer was hardly a dozen feet away, and a half moon shone, but amid the darkling

shadows of the forest it was effectually hidden. Soon it went off, now and then nipping at a twig as it moved along.

Near by was a big dam that the lumbermen used in controlling the water to float their spring drives of logs out of the wilderness. In the early morning Pete resorted to the dam to catch some trout for breakfast. A stick a few feet long that he picked up on the shore served for a pole, and a piece of red string for a line. He had some good flies which it was his habit to carry twined into the ribbon of his hat, and he fastened one of them to the string. The trout seemed more inclined to bite at that gay string than to snap at the fly, but he caught two, and the larger one weighed about a pound. We had all we could eat, and yet Pete seemed a little surprised when I remarked that it would have been a pity to catch any more. He assured me that most visitors to the woods are seldom considerate either of the fish or of the interests of other persons who find pleasure in angling. The future is nothing to them, and they disregard the game laws whenever they think they can do so without getting into trouble. They catch fish for the pride of numbers and pounds of weight, and when they have taken their prey to camp and gloated over it they throw most of it away. Truly, they are "sports" as the guides call them and not genuine sportsmen.

We started promptly right after breakfast, and Pete went off alone to "snub" down the quick water of

Webster Stream, standing in the stern of the canoe, pick-pole in hand, ready for all emergencies. I tramped along a loggers' road which furnished a short cut to the next lake, and was soon out of sight and hearing of the stream. Once I crossed a burnt tract where the trees were all dead and blackened and the ground was strewn with charred trunks and fragments, but for the most part my way led through the thick green forest which apparently had never been devastated by either fire or axes.

When I reached the next lake I sat down to wait for Pete. An hour passed, then two hours, and still he did not come. Finally, a good deal perturbed, I started to follow up the stream in search of him. I wondered what I would do if thrown on my own resources, without food or shelter, and separated from the nearest habitation by twenty miles of rough forest. As hastily as possible I made my way along, sometimes on the loose stones at the borders of the channel, sometimes through the mud and brush on the banks. The water fretted its noisy way down the ravine, and on either side rose the silent woods, and the region seemed as devoid of human life as if mankind had never penetrated its sylvan wilds. But at last I was rejoiced, on turning a bend, to see Pete poling down the rocky torrent. I waved my hands and shouted a greeting. He, however, did not respond, and when the canoe crunched up on the pebbly shore near me he looked very sober.

"I've had hard luck," he said.

While searching for a place to land above a fall, around which he would have to carry, his canoe had got caught between two rocks in a swift current, and the bow had tipped down, and let in a deluge of water. At once his cargo was set adrift. He contrived to rescue some of the goods, but lost nearly all the food and tableware. Our flour was gone and our cornmeal—no more biscuits or pancakes or Johnnycake! The potatoes had disappeared and the eggs. No spoons or forks remained, and no knives except my tiny pocketknife and a sheath knife Pete carried at his side. He bemoaned with especial fervor the loss of his tobacco. The shellac and tacks with which he repaired his canoe were missing, and, worst of all, our matches had got soaked so that we could not kindle a fire.

After lunching on a few half wet crackers spread with butter, Pete went on down the shallow rapids. He took me in when we reached the lake, and we paddled its full length and entered the outlet—a crooked deadwater through a swamp. Low in the west the sun shone serenely from a sky that held not a single cloud. There was no wind, and the stumps and dead trees on the banks were perfectly mirrored in the water. We seemed to be afloat on liquid glass. Ducks abounded, and when a flock flew past us Pete lifted his paddle and took aim with it as if it was a gun. "Bang!" he shouted, and added, "I wish I had one of you fellers for my supper."

Presently we came to a large pond and began to look

for a camping-place. We saw several promising spots, but so far from the water across oozy flats of mud that it was impossible to approach them. When we reached the extreme end of the pond we were much disappointed to find that what we supposed was the channel tapered down to nothing. On ahead were snaggy masses of drift—broken tree-trunks and uprooted stumps that the wind had driven in high water onto the marshy lowlands. The sun had set, and the twilight gloom was deepening. It was too late to turn back, and we were obliged to disembark and pick a gingerly way along on the drift, carrying our blankets and a few other necessaries an eighth of a mile to solid ground. The journey was a precarious one, for the snags were thrown together in a chaotic tangle that necessitated much zigzagging and climbing. A misstep meant going knee deep in the black bog. Our pilgrimage ended in an old tote-road where we felt around in the dusk, cleared a space of sticks and stones, and spread our partially soaked blankets. Then we supped on the watery crackers, with a little maple syrup that had survived the wreck for sauce. We had nothing at all to drink because the water of the pond was too dubious for such use.

Our situation, lost in the wilderness without tent or fire, was anything but cheerful, and I could not help feeling some anxiety. Pete, however, spent the night under the blankets as equably as usual. I napped now and then, but was often awake watching the stars and the half moon that rose in the east and slowly climbed

the heavens. At last the stars paled with the coming dawn, and I crawled out. My hair was wet with dew, and the air was damp and chilling. I roused Pete, who got up shivering and wrapped a blanket around himself. Then we sat down and shared our last six crackers.

There were no inducements for lingering, and we packed up and started back to the canoe. The journey was even more difficult than it had been the night before, for the track on which we had to walk was slippery with frost. We hastily embarked and applied ourselves to a vigorous use of the paddles in order to get warm. After careful search we discovered that not far from the other end of the pond the true channel made a sudden turn which we had failed to observe on the evening previous.

In a short time we reached Grand Lake, and saw at a distance a canoe crossing our path. By putting forth all our strength we came within hail soon after it reached land and just as its three occupants were starting toward the neighboring mountains for a day's hunting. They advised us about our route and gave us some matches, and we went on our way. At the outlet of the lake, after navigating a series of rapids, we came to five or six miles of the most entrancing travel we had experienced. The water was very swift, sometimes slipping along smoothly, sometimes breaking into rippling shallows where we had to choose our course carefully and dodge among the slightly submerged

Breakfast preparations

boulders. It was the perfection of motion—that slide down hill on the clear water.

We were hemmed in by wooded shores where were evergreens and birches, mingled with maples that were beginning to flash with autumn gold and scarlet. The kingfishers were always flitting from bank to bank, and we saw two or three great long-legged cranes go flapping away. Once we heard a strange keen cry repeated again and again, and were puzzled to know what creature produced it. Then an enormous, broad-winged bird sprang up from the weeds on the bank near which we were speeding and lit on a stump. It was a bald-headed eagle. After an inquiring look or two it flapped down into the undergrowth and resumed its squawking.

Late in the forenoon we came to so rough a passage that I resorted to a footpath, while Pete shot down a succession of little ledges that have the name of Stair Falls. Not far beyond was the first of the Grand Falls where a carry was plainly necessary. Just above it we unloaded and drew out the canoe, and spread the things wet in yesterday's wreck to dry in the warm sunshine. Pete started a fire, and we looked over our remaining eatables which consisted of a chunk of pork, another of bacon, a little butter and tea, and a can each of pine-apple, beans, and succotash. We decided to dine on the beans, and as Pete had left his hunting-knife somewhere during the morning we opened the can with his ax and hammer. For spoons we used the covers of two tin boxes.

There was a bad tear in the canvas of the canoe, and Pete found a piece of cedar in the driftwood, cut out some pegs with my knife, and using his awl and hammer mended the break. Then he heated some lumps of tar which he pulled from an old bateau stranded on the shore, and applied the sticky stuff to the edges of the tear and other weak spots.

By and by we packed up and lugged our truck down to quieter water. One fall succeeded another with short stretches of paddling between, and we had a toilsome afternoon. Pete had an especially hard task carrying the canoe balanced on his head and shoulders along the rocky, brushy path, and when we came to the fourth fall he decided to launch the canoe just below the worst of the drop and shoot the rest of the way. The stream here narrowed to a wild rush of tangled currents and foaming waves between steep, ragged cliffs. I was loth to have him undertake the boisterous voyage; but he was not to be deterred, and after putting a rock in the bow for ballast he started, leaving the baggage on the bank. To see that frail boat contending with the torrent, dashed this way and that, and making frenzied leaps of half its length amid the foam was enough to cause a man's hair to stand on end.

However, it went through safely, and we got our things into it and once more went sliding along on the gentle but swift declivities of the stream until we came to the fifth fall. Here, on a low, rocky outjut of the

shore in a little group of pines and birches, we found an idyllic stopping-place for the night. We picked up some dry sticks, pulled a few loose shreds of bark from a big birch for kindling, and soon had a fire brightly blazing. Next we got the tent up, spread our bedding beneath it on a carpet of pine needles, and then supped on succotash and bacon with a dessert of pineapple. Later we lay by the fire for a while, enjoying the coziness of our retreat, but retired early to bed with the music of the waterfall to lull us to sleep.

In the morning, after breakfast, Pete investigated the watery declivity below us and concluded he could navigate it. So he loaded the canoe and started, and I watched his swift course down the rude torrent. Suddenly the canoe hit some obstruction, swerved around sidewise on the verge of a ledge and went over bottom upward. It disappeared and Pete with it in the tumbled and frothy waters, and I had doubts if I should ever see him again alive and whole.

With all haste I ran along the dew-wet path in the alder bushes till I came opposite the scene of the catastrophe. Happily Pete had survived, and there he was out in mid-river on a submerged boulder turning his canoe right side up. That done, he waded to shore with it. His hat was gone and all of our belongings that had been in the boat except the pick-pole and tent. He at once got into the canoe and went in pursuit of the missing things, most of which he recovered along the borders of a pebbly island below the fall. Our worst

losses were the bag of cooking utensils, the ax and hammer, and the tin cup and sponge we used for bailing.

On the bank, near where I rejoined Pete, was a little shack, such as is found at frequent intervals on these forest streams, built for shelter by the watchers of the spring log drives. It was mainly of bark with a bed of twigs inside. Pete's teeth were chattering, and in order to warm and dry himself he set fire to the shack. I furnished the matches, for I had taken the precaution to carry in my pocket some of those we had been given the previous day. Pete began to get off his outer garments and was hanging them to dry before the crackling flames when we were startled by two sharp explosions from the fire which roused the echoes in the quiet valley.

I promptly made a dash for the big timber, and Pete came close behind. Our alarm had been occasioned by a couple of dynamite caps, but we were by no means certain that an explosion of dynamite itself would not follow and blow us out of existence. However, we gradually recovered from our fears and returned to the fire. By and by Pete put on the dryest of his garments and my coat, and we resumed our voyaging. Then came many miles of beautiful canoeing in the perfect calm of a sunny September morning between shores where the trees and undergrowth were almost tropical in their dense rank masses of foliage, and on a stream whose strong gliding current carried us with swift ease down its never-ending incline.

Pete wound a blue handkerchief around his head to

take the place of his lost hat, and he removed his shoes and stockings to let them dry a little. But that gave the flies a chance at him, and he complained that they would "chew a man's leg off."

Toward noon we came to a dwelling on a knoll in a clearing. We landed and found two men in charge of the place, which served in a small way for a loggers' camp and a shelter for sportsmen. They supplied us with a few biscuits and doughnuts and a tin cup full of beans. These things enabled us to make our lunch that day a feast.

By evening we reached the railroad and the end of our voyage, and I went on by train to a populous mill village. But though I had parted from my guide and was a score of miles from the wilderness of the loggers and hunters, the civilization even there seemed not wholly secure. For about midnight I was startled by a terrific bellowing close at hand outside of the hotel. I wondered what sort of a barbaric demon had invaded the town, and I crept to the window to look out. The creature seemed to be just around the corner of an adjacent building. All the dogs in the place had begun to bark, lights were appearing, and voices were inquiring what was the matter. The bellowing continued at intervals, and two of the hotel maids and a man servant who were on the back porch seemed to think the animal was an expiring cow. "Do something, Willy," the girls urged. "Don't let the poor cow die without trying to help her."

Willy crossed the yard and looked around the corner, but at that instant the creature let forth a blood-curdling bellow that made him beat a hasty retreat, and the girls could not get him to venture into the vicinity of the fearsome beast again. At a window, opposite, was a tousled man with a lamp in his hand, swearing horribly. He complained that no one could sleep with such a noise, and declared that the bellower, and the dogs, too, ought to be shot. But now the beast moved off, its raucous voice grew fainter in the distance, and quiet was gradually restored.

I learned in the morning that we were indebted for the serenade to a bull that had gotten loose from a neighboring farm. This episode gave a final touch to a jaunt that had decidedly more excitement in it than I relished at the time. Yet now that it is past I realize that in some respects, at least, it was ideal, and even the dangers have a savor by no means wholly disagreeable in the backlook.

Note.—One can journey comfortably in an automobile over a good dirt or gravel road, ninety miles, from Bangor to Greenville at the southern end of Moosehead Lake. That is civilization's jumping-off place, and beyond is the wilderness. The lake has about four hundred miles of shore line. It is plentifully stocked with fish, and the surrounding forests abound in large game. Along the borders are numerous camps for the accommodation of hunters. A fine view can be had of Mount Katahdin on clear days. From Greenville a small steamer runs to the north end of the lake, and thence a short carry enables one to start a canoe trip on the streams and lakes of the vast unsettled forest country.

Artemus Ward's old home

II

ARTEMUS WARD'S TOWN

IT is always interesting to consider what effect environment has in the development of those whom the world honors. Were the home surroundings a stimulus or a handicap? What kind of people were the relatives, friends, and neighbors? What influence did nature exert?"

I was curious to see Waterford, Maine, the birthplace and boyhood home of Charles Farrar Browne, better known as Artemus Ward, to get answers to just such questions, and I had the feeling that I ought to discover in the inhabitants and region something to account for the peculiar qualities of his humor. The town is about fifty miles north of Portland, and a half dozen miles from the nearest railway station. I arrived at this station one morning in early October and went on by stage to Waterford. The air was briskly cool, the sky serenely blue, and the sun shown without a cloud to interrupt its clear rays. There had been frosts, but the crickets and grasshoppers still chirped and fiddled, though not with the full vigor of the late summer.

For much of the distance the road was through woodland gay with autumn color. Some green leafage still lingered, but for the most part the tints were of yellow

and red, varying from delicate creamy tones to vigorous browns and flaming scarlets. The wind was blowing and making faint, mysterious music on its forest harp and here and there loosening a leaf and sending it rustling down into the undergrowth. At intervals along the streams were rude little sawmills, and in spite of the fact that the country has been long settled it retains something of raw wildness.

There are several Waterfords—North, South, and East, and Waterford Flat. The last was the village of Artemus Ward. Its name sounds unpromising, but in its immediate neighborhood the region, which for the most part is rather monotonous, crumples up into a rugged picturesqueness that has real charm, and that seems very well calculated to nurture a genius. Lakes, ponds, and streams abound, and one of these streams known as Crooked River runs eighteen miles in its erratic course across the nine mile width of the town. It afforded just the kind of navigation to draw volumes of profanity from the old-time raftsmen.

Waterford Flat is a nook among the hills fronting on a body of water which is called Keoka Lake, but which formerly had the more vigorously natural name of Tom Pond. The latter name was acquired away back in the days when Paugus, the chief of an Indian tribe in the vicinity, made himself a terror on the frontiers. He and his followers committed so many depredations that Massachusetts offered a bounty of one hundred pounds for every Indian scalp. Captain Lovewell led

an expedition against Paugus in the spring of 1725, but was attacked by the Indians and only fourteen out of thirty-four in the English party survived to return to their friends. One of these was Thomas Chamberlain, who, after killing Paugus in the fight, saved his own life by swimming across the pond at Waterford and hiding under a shelving rock on its borders. This episode gave the pond its early name, and the shore where he hid is still called Tom Rock Beach.

One of the wooded hills back of the village is known as Mount Tirem, a name supposed to have originated with some Indians, who, in speaking to the early settlers of climbing its steep sides, said, "Tire 'em Injuns." Another height is Bald Pate, so called by the pioneers because its top was then entirely denuded of trees, the result of a fire that had recently swept it. Loftiest of all is Bear Mountain, which owes its name to the killing of a bear that attempted to swim across Tom Pond from its base.

Waterford village is a comfortable, sleepy little place whose homes cluster around a small, tree-shadowed common. The houses are nearly all wooden, are painted white, and have green blinds. It supports two stores and a church. At one end of the common is a signboard, which reads, "10 Miles to Norway." Other places roundabout are Sweden, Denmark, Poland, Paris, and Naples. Do not these names indicate a sense of humor in the original settlers of the wilderness? Waterford itself has a Punkin Street, and what is now Fern

Avenue was formerly Skunk Alley, and there is an outlying district called Blackguard which took its name from the character of the people who used to live there.

I found the village delightful in its quiet serenity, and it was particularly appealing in the evening when the cows were driven from the outlying pastures to their home stables and came pacing along under the elms of the common, while the cowbells hung on their necks gave forth a dull-toned melody. It was a much livelier place when Artemus Ward was born there in 1834. Many emigrants passed through it then on their way to the West, and the stages were crowded with passengers in pursuit of business or pleasure. The hotels presented an especially busy scene on the arrival of the stages, and the several stores had a large trade in furnishing supplies to lumbermen. One of these stores was kept by Artemus Ward's father, who died in 1847.

For general information about the region I interviewed my hotel landlord. "Raising sweet corn for canning is one of our principal industries," he said. "The farmers pick the ears off and then cut the corn green and put it into silos. They run quite heavy dairies, and a man goes round gatherin' the cream twice a week and brings it to the creamery.

"You'll find every farmer raisin' anywhere from an acre to fifteen acres of sweet corn. They commence pickin' along the 25th of August. The ears are carried right to the corn shops, and the help is there to handle

The village school

it. They'll husk a load in a few minutes. The pay is five cents a bushel. Husking comes pretty rough on your wrists. After you'd husked all day possibly you wouldn't feel very much like husking the next morning. There are men who can husk out sixty-five bushels in a day, but I tell you they've got to keep pretty busy to do that.

"Men will quit a good payin' job to go to work in a corn shop. Yes, sure they will. They earn considerable for what they do, but the net returns are small because there are so many shutdowns. When the last ear of a lot of corn is husked they may have to wait two hours, without pay, for the next lot; and if there's no corn to husk there's none to pack, and things come to a standstill all along the line. But lots of people don't like to work. You know that, don't you? Every one around here wants to go into the corn shops when they start up. It's a fascinating job. The shop is a busy interesting place to go into. A hundred or more persons may be working there together, and they can have a dickens of a good time while they're waiting when there's nothing to do.

"Perhaps the corn shops are a good thing, but I can't see 'em in that light. I think they're a complete cuss to the country on account of the way they run up wages. You can't hire men on your farm short of thirty-five or forty-five dollars a month and board, and the worst of it is they're so blamed independent. If I hire a man I want him when I want him, but it's

got so that he's more the boss than you are yourself. Go to giving him orders, or criticize him, and he quits. I paid a man two dollars a day this summer, and he set down half the time. I was up at five o'clock. He'd get out at quarter past six. I had my own work to do and I couldn't chase around to see whether he was doing his work.

"We've got an all-fired big crop of apples here this year, but I only have a small orchard, and probably my apples won't fill more'n seventy or eighty barrels. I've just sold 'em for thirty-five cents a barrel on the trees. That don't look like much of a price, but, by gorry! I think I hit the mark better'n the feller who bought 'em."

Early in my stay I visited South Waterford where Artemus Ward and his near relatives lie buried in the pleasant Elm Vale Cemetery. Their names are spelled Brown on the stones, but Artemus in later life wrote his name Browne out of deference to an old English family from which his own was descended.

I met the elderly caretaker of the cemetery, and when he found that I was seeking information he began to tell me some of his troubles with a picturesqueness that seemed to me worthy of the region that produced the famous humorist.

"There was a photographer here in the summer," he said, "and the feller took soap and water and scrubbed the moss and stains off from a few of the gravestones that he wanted to make pictures of. Pretty soon after-

ward a man who spends his vacations in the town come to the cemetery, and he see that the gravestones of some of his ancestors had been cleaned. So he pitched into me. He's cranky by nature, and he accused me of doing what that photographer had done. I told him I didn't do it, but he said, 'You don't look to me as if you was tellin' the truth.'

"Why, he was real impudent, and he was goin' to have the law on me. I says to him: 'You have to find a man guilty before you sentence him to death. You're crazy anyway, and it kind o' seems to me you're talking a little too much with your mouth.'

"'Well,' he says, 'whoever scrubbed those gravestones was a blackguard and a vandal, and you're responsible as the caretaker of this cemetery.'

"'The town don't pay me to watch this cemetery night and day,' I told him, 'and I won't stand here and listen to too much of your lip.'

"Oh, he don't amount to nothing, but his wife has money—lots of it. He can't do much domineering at home because she'd call him right down.

"'I hope you'll go out of this place and stay a while and give us a little rest,' I says to him.

"'Before I go,' he says, 'I'm goin' to see that you don't work here any more.'

"'I'm much obliged to you,' I says. 'I been wantin' to get rid of the job for two years. I wish you would have me discharged, but don't be too sure about it because probably your influence ain't very great.'

"That only made him madder, and he went on tellin' me what he thought of me till I said: 'You see this grave I'm diggin'. If you don't stop your talk I'll lay you in this hole and put cement on top. I don't s'pose I'll get any pay for buryin' you, but I'll do it free gratis, if you don't clear out.'

"He went away then."

Artemus Ward died in 1867, which is not so long ago but that people can be found in his home region who remember him distinctly. One of the village women said to me: "The place has not changed a great deal since he was a boy here. It is about the same size, there is the same white church, and many of the same houses stand around the common. The old 'Brown house' where Charles was born burned in 1871, but 'Aunt Car'line,' as his mother was called in Waterford, had long before moved to what had been her father's house. That is here yet, a substantial, two-story building on the borders of the common, and it is still owned in the family.

"Mrs. Brown had four children, but only Charles and Cyrus grew to manhood. Charles was her favorite, I think. Cyrus, who was about seven years older than Charles, became a newspaper man and was successful. We considered him the smarter man of the two, but he didn't happen to strike it so lucky. I remember he was at home here sick abed when I was a schoolgirl. The village schoolhouse was just beyond a brook at the north end of the common. It was an old weatherbeaten

building that at some time had been painted white, but not much of the paint was left. Inside were primitive box desks, much hand-carved. The teacher's desk was on a platform, and its sides were boarded up like a pulpit.

"The children came in from the farms and filled the schoolhouse. They were of all sizes from five up to twenty when the big boys attended in the winter. Then we had a lyceum with debates and a paper mostly made up of local hits that was regularly prepared. It came my turn to edit the paper, and Cyrus sent word to have me come to see him and he would help me write up some things. I was glad of his help, for I was quite a little girl to be the editress. The matter we wrote together was humorous, but I don't know now just what it was about.

"After Charles had left Waterford and become famous he usually returned every year to spend the summer with his mother. He wasn't very strong. He was tubercular. His hands were whiter than any woman's, almost. They were small and long, and I recall hearing my father say that Charles couldn't wear bracelets because his wrists were as large as his hands, and the bracelets would slip off. Father and he were great cronies. They were own cousins and were said to look alike.

"Charles was always funny, even in his ordinary talk. He bought a house near New York at Yonkers and invited his mother to go to visit him.

"'Charlie,' she said, 'if I do go sometime how shall I know your house?'

"'Oh, you'll know it by the cupola and the mortgage that are on it,' he told her.

"'Well, I'll never stop in the house if there's a mortgage on it,' she declared.

"When he got to be well-known as a lecturer he had full houses and a large income, and he would carry a good deal of money about with him. But he spent it freely. Being lionized as he was he had to live up to his reputation. He owned considerable jewelry. For one thing there was a very beautiful gold chain which had been given him by the miners in California. It was so heavy that he said he only wore it in the afternoon. That was his funny way of speaking."

Another contemporary of Artemus Ward's whom I met was a stooping, elderly village man who walked with a cane. I called at his house in the evening, and I called early because I had been told that he "went to bed with the chickens." We sat in his kitchen in the gradually increasing dusk.

"Yes, I knew Charles Brown," he said, "and I helped lower him into the ground. His body was brought from England about the beginning of June in a metallic casket all sealed and soldered up. The casket was cut open at his mother's request, and we see it was Charles inside. There was a funeral at the house attended by a few of the neighbors, and then we went to the cemetery at South Waterford. We didn't

have a hearse, but used a two-seated spring wagon, as was the custom here. By taking out the seats room was made for the box, and the driver would sit up on that. The others went in their own teams.

"I don't know much about Charles as a boy except that he didn't take to farming at all. He never hankered after manual labor, and when he come here on his summer visits the lazy critter didn't do nothin' but have a good time. He'd lay around on the grass or go to ride or do anything he see fit. It was kind of a restful vacation, I should call it, but after he went into the show business I guess he may have worked some getting ready for the winter campaign. He was a bright, witty feller—no mistake about that. He had a vein of wit that all the Browns had. Cyrus, his brother, was pretty cute, too.

"To get from here back to New York Charles would drive eleven miles to the railroad and go by train down to Portland where he'd take the boat for Boston. Once he was going on board the boat after he'd been having a little too festive a time, and he ran down the gang plank and across the deck and threw up over the rail. When he'd relieved himself he said to those that were with him, 'It always makes me sick to be on shipboard.'

"Another time he went onto the boat in the evening just before the time for it to start. He'd been eating hearty and celebrating some with his friends, and he went right to bed in his stateroom. The next morning,

just after he woke up, a man who was travelling with him asked him how he'd slept.

"'Not very well,' he said. 'I'm always sick goin' around Cape Elizabeth.'

"But the boat hadn't left the dock on account of the weather being rough.

"Charles was a poor sick feller when he left here to go to England, and he hadn't ought to have made such a trip. That wound him up in the show business.

"We thought he'd leave considerable property, and he did will away a good deal, but nobody could find it. Well, there were roughish fellers in those days same as now. They'd steal the eyes out of your head if they could.

"The trouble with both Charles and Cyrus was that they drank. Whiskey ruined 'em. That was what was the matter with 'em. I tell you whiskey is good in some cases, but I don't believe it helped them fellers any. They'd have lived longer without it.

"You'd better see Mr. Wheeler. He was raised here on the Flat right beside of Charles and knew him well. He's a feller well booked up, too, and can give some light on this subject."

The next morning I found Mr. Wheeler in his barn getting out some barrels in preparation for apple-picking.

"I ain't any chicken," he said, "and it is a long time since Charles Brown and I were boys together, so I can't remember as much about him as I wish I could.

But I recall that one thing he used to do was to get up a circus in his folks' barn. They had an old crumple-horn cow that he'd dress up in great shape in blankets of different colors for an elephant, and he'd tell us the elephant's good qualities. The cow didn't like it, but the rest of us did. The calves and the dogs and cats served for other strange animals. Charles acted as clown, and he made a pretty good one. He had some assistants who were acrobats or thought they were.

"He was full of his fun, but there was nothing vicious about him. He simply liked to do things that would raise a laugh. At school he was always playing jokes on the rest of the scholars and was a terrible torment to them. Of course he'd get called down once in a while for his pranks, but the teachers liked him. Every one liked him all through life.

"William Allen sat in the seat right in front of him. William was a good scholar, but kind of a sleepy fellow. He'd sit with his head bowed forward studying. Charles was forever dabbling with ink, and one day he took up his ink bottle and poured the contents down the back of William's neck. I saw that performance. The ink ran down on the floor into the cracks under the seats, and when I was in the old schoolhouse as much as twenty-five years later the stains were still there. The building stands yet up here side of the road, but is now a carpenter's shop.

"There were fifty-six of us in the school the last winter I went. A man taught in winter and a woman

in summer. We learned more than the children do now—got more practical information. I won a book once as a prize for spelling, and I've kept it ever since. The twelve or fifteen in the class would line up, and if one missed a word and the next one below spelled it right they'd change places. The best speller was at the head of the line most of the time, and the poorest at the foot. We didn't have a janitor, but did the work ourselves. There was a fire list of the boys, and they took turns making the fire; and there was a sweeping list of the girls, and they took turns doing the sweeping. When there was snow we slid down the steep hill that was close by, and in the warm months we'd play in the brook.

"Charles wasn't out at recess tearing around with the other boys in their rough sports. He was different in his tastes from most of us, though when any fun was on hand in town he was generally there early and stayed late. We used to have school exhibitions, and if we acted the incident in William Tell where the apple was shot off the boy's head, or anything in that line, Charles was sure to be in it. He'd play baseball with us on the common, and he'd get up in the middle of the night to shoot off some powder and celebrate the Fourth of July.

"I was out, too, firing off an old gun I had, but I never shot a gun at game in my life. I didn't take to that sort of sport, though once in a while I'd go spearing pickerel on the overflowed meadow in spring. That

was done after dark in a boat. We'd make an iron basket by riveting together old wagon tires and that kind of thing, and put it on a stick five or six feet high near the bow of the boat, and light some pitch pine in it for a torch. One fellow would row and the other spear the fish.

"When Charles was about twenty-five and was editing a little humorous paper called *Vanity Fair* in New York I went down there for a couple of days and was with him quite a little. He was a good entertainer. We took in the shipping wharves and the big vessels and Central Park and went around to the dance halls. One of those halls was a room sixty feet square with the walls all mirrors. I'd never seen anything like it before, and I haven't since."

The home of the humorist's mother, now called "Wheelbarrow Farm," is owned by a woman relative who has this to say of him. "He led a gay life, I think, but though he sometimes drank to excess he did not have protracted sprees. He was tall, slim, and bony, and he easily assumed on the platform a manner that was awkward and made him appear sort of green-looking. But if you met him you found him genial, courteous, and charming, and his talk full of witty nonsense. I heard him lecture once, and just before he began my mother and I went around to speak to him. He insisted that we should sit on the stage. What he said was mostly foreign to his subject. He spoke anything that came into his mind, and he was

so absurd that I nearly rolled under my chair. Mother said she never laughed so much in her life."

At the age of fourteen the humorist's schooldays ended, and he left home to make his own way in the world. For a time he worked in the neighboring town of Norway, and thither I followed on his trail. As I entered the town I made some inquiries of a man I met on the street, who responded: "Yes, Artemus was a devil here in a newspaper printing office. He learned the printing trade and contributed to the paper. He was a mischievous cud, you know, and when he went to school people thought he was a dunce and didn't amount to anything, but when he grew up he played to the crowned heads of Europe.

"There was a rivalry between the paper here and the one in the neighboring town of Paris, and each one always bragged about any improvements it made and crowed over the other one. The Paris paper for one while seemed to be having much the most to crow about, and Artemus wrote this paragraph: 'A large improvement has been made in our office. We have bored a hole in the bottom of our sink and set a slop pail under it. What will the hell-hounds over to Paris think now?'

"He was a funny fellow, Artemus Ward was. Once he was somewhere and got strapped. He found a man he knew, and said, 'If it's not too much out of place I wish you'd loan me some money.'

"The man was willing and handed over what

Artemus said he needed, and then asked when he'd pay it back.

"'Well,' Artemus answered, 'I'll be pretty busy on the Resurrection Day. Let's call it the day after.'

"If he was lecturing here in Maine he'd refer to a time when he 'spoke before a refined and intelligent audience in East Stoneham.' The fun of that was that East Stoneham was a jumping-off place. It was the end of the road, and the people there couldn't read or write.

"But the greatest joke he ever perpetrated was the will he made over in England. He called in all the nobility to witness it and disposed of his property as if he was a millionaire. Really he didn't have a darn cent."

From a Norway lawyer I got further information. "When I started to practice I opened an office down at Waterford," he said. "I had plenty of time on my hands, for I didn't have much to do except to make out occasional deeds at fifty cents apiece. Once Artemus brought me a boy that he'd picked up somewhere, and he hired me to teach him. He didn't value money, and he'd have given away his last dollar to a friend in need.

"When he was at home he smoked and strolled around and joked with the boys. He was quite a fellow to lay abed in the morning—at least, his mother thought he was, and he wouldn't have breakfast until along toward ten o'clock. Afterward he'd get his mail and bring it to my office to read.

"One time he was telling me about his visiting Los Angeles. 'It was nothing but a village,' he said. 'I'd heard there was a river running through the place, and I wanted to see it. 'Twasn't much of a river. I hunted for it quite a while before I found it, and then I was thirsty and drank it up.'

"He was droll not only in what he said, but in his manner. Many of the things he said, which people would go into a perfect hurrah over, would have attracted no notice if another person had said them. It is claimed that he is the only person who could make every one laugh in an English audience."

What I had heard of Artemus Ward's will made me desirous to see it, and I sought the county courthouse. His death occurred in England on March 6, 1867, and the will is dated about two weeks previous. It is not the extraordinary document that the popular imagination pictures, and its most interesting portions are these:

"I desire that my body may be buried in Waterford, Maine. I give the library of books bequeathed to me by my late Uncle, Calvin Farrar, and those that have been added by me, to the boy or girl who at an examination to be held between the first day of January and the first day of April immediately succeeding my descease shall be declared to be the best scholar in Waterford Upper Village, such scholar to be a native of that last mentioned place and under the age of eighteen years.

"I bequeath the residue of my estate towards forming a fund for the founding of an asylum for wornout printers in the United States, and I direct that the same be paid to Mr. Horace Greeley of New York."

Whatever personal property the humorist had in his possession in England when he died mysteriously disappeared, but a few thousand dollars were realized on his house at Yonkers. This went to children who were relatives in his home town. His mother had enough property to supply her own simple wants as long as she lived.

Notes.—All along the Maine coast are delightful bays and islands which attract a host of warm-weather visitors. Notable above all the other outing places of the coast is that isle of enchantment, Mount Desert. Champlain discovered it in 1613 and gave it its name, which was suggested by the bare rocky summits of its mountains. The charm of its scenery began to win the favor of wandering artists and parties of college students on a vacation about 1860. Bar Harbor, which was then a primitive village of wooden shanties, has since become one of the most popular of fashionable American summer resorts.

The chief city of the coast is Portland, which the visitor will be interested to recall is the birthplace of Longfellow. The house in which he was born was built by his grandfather, General Peleg Wadsworth and, though in the heart of the city, has been preserved as a public memorial. Twenty-six miles northeast is Brunswick where Bowdoin College is located and where Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote "Uncle Tom's Cabin" when her husband was an instructor in the college.

In going from Portland to Artemus Ward's town the most direct route is over good dirt and gravel roads, forty-four miles, to Norway. About half way you pass through Poland Springs, famous for its

table waters, with fine views and pleasant drives. A more picturesque route, but longer and over poorer roads, is along the west side of Sebago Lake.

About fifty miles north of Waterford is Farmington, said to be the most beautiful village of its size in Maine. Here is the homestead where Jacob Abbott, author of the Rollo Rooks, spent his last years. Not far beyond, to the northwest, is the famous Rangeley Lakes region. The chain of lakes, all connected by navigable waterways, covers eighty square miles. It is a fisherman's paradise. Small steamers ply the lakes and call at the various camps. These camps usually consist of a dozen or so log cabins connected with one another by plank walks, and each intended to accommodate three or four persons.

III

JUNE IN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS

AFTER the heat and dust of a long railroad ride it was a relief to get into the near vicinity of the soaring mountain heights, serene and cool and blue. The train followed up the valley of a little stony river, and much of the time we were in the shadow of the adjacent wooded hills. We passed through several villages, and there were scattered farms, but the region still has a flavor of the wilderness in its abounding woodland and rugged mountains, the piles of logs or sawed lumber one sees, and the big stumps in occasional farm fields. The cleared land is uneven and rocky and does not lend itself readily to agriculture, yet there are some evidently prosperous dairy farms, and excellent crops of potatoes, oats, and hay were growing in favored situations.

I went to Bethlehem which is higher up and has more hotels than any other village in New England. At the beginning of the nineteenth century it consisted of a few scattered log cabins, and the settlers' fields were full of dead girdled trees. It could boast of only a single small hotel as late as 1865. Now there are thirty. These and the numerous summer homes harbor a multitude in July, August, and September,

but the permanent inhabitants probably do not exceed a thousand. It lies on a breezy upland slope with a vast panorama of mountain ranges rimming most of the horizon. All the big wooden hotels had been put in order for the summer inrush, and what with the painting and scrubbing and other renovating they looked almost painfully spick and span.

At the sunset hour when I arrived the birds were singing their jubilant evening songs in the village trees and in the neighboring woodland, and I could distinguish the rich notes of the wood thrush, the carolling of robins, and the clear, sweet notes of the Peabody bird.

As yet few of the summer people had come, and the local folk were much engrossed in their own affairs. One of the town's women stopped to visit in the twilight on my hotel piazza when she was going home from prayer-meeting. She related some of the recent history of her church. A few years previous they had a minister of whom she spoke in the warmest praise. He was a preacher of marked ability, and a man of culture and character with a keen desire to do faithful work and to help those in need. One winter he shovelled snow from the paths and did other odd jobs about the place of a lone woman who was ill. This was not to the liking of some of his congregation. They thought such tasks beneath a minister's dignity, and there were various other ways in which his personality did not appeal to them. The upshot of it all was that

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he was presently dismissed. A while afterward another minister was hired, and he was given a grand reception.

"But I didn't go," the chronicler said. "They asked me why, and I told 'em: 'He's got plenty of friends now. He'll need some later.'

"Sure enough, they soon tired of him, but he wasn't of the gentle sort like the other man, and when they tried to get rid of him he fought back. There was a big row, and I told 'em, 'You people remind me of a man who for the first six months after he married liked his wife so well he wanted to eat her, and the next six months he wished he had.'

"For quite a spell we didn't have any minister, but lately we've got a new man. They gave him a reception, too. Only three went to it. That's all right. He might just as well find out everything is dead when he first gets here as afterward."

Just then the landlord came out on the piazza. "This is hot weather," he remarked. "By jolly! I was pretty near petered today. I had to drive a few miles down the valley, and I never was as thankful before that we don't have mosquitoes or black flies nor nothin' else of that sort of any consequence at Bethlehem. They nearly e't me up down there."

"What are the black flies?" I asked.

"They're a fly about quarter as big as a common house fly," he replied, "and they bite to beat the band. Then there's the midgets. They're so small you can hardly see 'em. You don't notice 'em much till they

bite. They're worse than the black fly. Oh, those little midgets are something terrible! If any of 'em bite me the bitten place swells up and itches and stings."

A thunderstorm was muttering and blinking in the distance. During the night much rain fell, and the thunder reverberated among the heights. There were, too, a number of near and startling crashes which made the timid say their prayers and caused some persons at the hotel to get up and dress to be ready for emergencies. But the next morning, after the sun looked through the clouds, all the growing things had been refreshed and the dust was laid on the highways, and every one agreed that the storm had been a beneficence.

I engaged a team and driver and went off over the hills to the Franconia Notch. We soon had the mighty mountains before us with their heads among the clouds, and with the sunshine and shadows playing over them in shifting hues of delicate green and purple. On some of them there were great expanses of a light emerald color, which the driver said were young growths of birches that had started up where fires had run through the forest.

"We don't have those fires the way we used to," he added. "The woods are protected now. There are lookout places on the mountains where men are watching for fires all the whole summer through. The men have telescopes, and their lookouts are connected with the villages by telephone. As soon as they see smoke

of a fire starting they telephone down saying where it is, and men are soon on the spot putting it out."

We travelled a winding road that was constantly going up or down hill, and was usually closely hemmed in by the forest. Nearly always a stream was near by singing over the stones and boulders that strewed its course, and sometimes raising its voice in louder cadence where it made a sudden descent in a waterfall. We passed several typical mountain hotels—enormous, wide-spreading, many-windowed structures with carefully-kept grounds and close-clipped golf links. They contrasted strangely with the wilderness around and seemed very frail and ephemeral when compared with the vast upheaval of granite mountains that formed the usual background.

Our first stop was at Echo Lake, a dainty body of water with steep wooded heights rising from its borders. I rambled along a waterside path and shouted, but a roistering wind was blowing, and the echo did not work well. The nymph on the tree-clad bluff across the lake only responded faintly and uncertainly.

A mile farther on was Profile Lake where the great attraction is the Old Man of the Mountain. The woods sweep up a precipitous slope for more than a thousand feet, and you see near the summit of the mountain the grim stone features of the Old Man outjutting from a tremendous cliff. The face itself is eighty feet in length, but the beholder does not realize its great size at such a distance, and marvels most that it is so strikingly

human. The Indians were its original discoverers, and I wondered what impression was made on them by that strange face gazing forth from the brow of the wilderness mountain.

A scarcely less famous attraction of the Franconia Notch is the Flume. It is a little aside from the main valley up a steep slope. There you find an almost straight cleft in the mountain, nine hundred feet long and sixty or more deep. The perpendicular walls are only a few feet apart, and a little stream rushes down the shadowy depths with much noise and tumult. To enter the Flume on a warm day is like going into an ice-box. The stream and a strewing of boulders occupy all the space at the bottom of the chasm, and a board walk has been built just above the stream along one wall. The wet cliffs loom on either side, and up aloft you glimpse the foliage of the trees that grow on their verge. At the far end of the Flume the stream leaps from the brow of a precipice in a graceful cascade.

Formerly there was an enormous suspended boulder in the Flume so firmly wedged between the cliffs that it seemed destined to stay there until doomsday. But in 1883 a violent thunderstorm started a landslide up beyond the cleft, and all the rubbish came down through and carried along the boulder. The mass of rocks and earth and trees was deposited some distance below. Whether the boulder was broken into fragments, or whether it lies buried entire in the débris no one knows.

After I returned to the highway I tramped off in another direction on a sylvan path to "The Pool." Here in a deep nook of the woodland a stream dropped over a ledge into a rockbound basin. The mossy cliffs and towering trees that walled in the pool made it particularly cool and secluded and romantic. A lone fisherman sat on a shelving rock patiently angling for trout and smoking cigarets. When I came away he followed empty-handed making very scurrilous remarks about a certain trout he had seen in the pool which very inconsiderately refused to be caught.

During the day's ride my driver casually mentioned that a certain Bethlehem man named Thompson had trapped a bear a fortnight before. I met him in the village that evening—a gray elderly man, but still vigorous. "Yes, I caught a bear this summer," he acknowledged. "I got him over on Gale River about three mile from here. I've caught eight bears there in the last five years. This one was fat as a pig. He weighed two hundred and fifty pounds. I gave considerable of the meat away to the neighbors. It was tender, and a lot of 'em e't it. But no bear meat for me! The animals smell too much like a colored person.

"Their hides are best in May and June, and that's the only time of year I care to trap 'em. They commence to shed their hair about the middle of July. Then the hides won't bring nothin'. The prices we git for good ones vary anywhere from twenty to forty dollars. Besides, there's a five dollar bounty which

you can collect by showing the hide to the proper official. He slits an ear or punches a hole in it so the bounty won't be collected a second time. The hide of the bear I got the other day is just as black as a crow. Come up to my house and I'll show it to you."

He led the way to a comfortable little dwelling on a side street and stepped in to get a lantern. Then he took me to the shed when the bearskin was nailed up on an inside wall, and told how difficult the process was of getting the skin off with the claws on it and the ears and other parts of the head all complete, which was the proper way if it was to be used for a rug. Afterward he locked the shed and brought a bear trap from the barn for me to see. It was a big, savage-looking affair with stout steel springs and cruel, toothed jaws.

Presently we adjourned to the house piazza, and my companion filled and lit his pipe. "Hunting runs in in the family," he remarked. "My father was a trapper and guide, and so was his father before him. He come into this town when he was a young feller. The region was about all woods then. It was a great timber country, and some of the people lived in log houses. Father was the first man who was ever paid as much as fifty cents a day for his labor here. Others got anywhere from twenty-five to forty cents.

"All he used to do at certain times of the year was hunting. I've seen him take his gun when he'd just got up in the morning and say to mother, 'I'll be back

to breakfast;' and he'd start off across country and not return for three days. He'd travel on and on looking for game. Come night he'd stop at some farmhouse, and he was always welcome.

"One fall, when I was a boy, he had one hundred and twelve fox skins hung up in the unfinished second story of the house. He stuffed 'em with hay, and they looked plump and full. They were hung up by the nose. Most of our foxes were red, but now and then we'd git a woods gray. Sometimes too, we'd shoot what we called a Samson fox that you'd think, to see it, had been in the fire and got its fur singed. It looked so mean that the hide wasn't worth much. We'd git some coon and mink, and quite a lot of sable or martin, and once in a great while an otter.

"My father lived to be ninety-five. People called him 'Old Man Thompson.' He knew all about wild animals. A feller come to him one day and said he'd tried again and again to keep red squirrels in a cage, but they pined away and died. 'You ketch your squirrel in a box trap,' Father told him, 'and don't let it eat for twenty-four hours. Then give it a dose of half molasses and half rum. After it gits over the effect of that it'll have forgotten its wild life and will thrive and be contented in the cage.'

"Nearly fifty years ago he caught the last wolf that was ever seen in this country. A man had drawed a dead ox out in his pasture, and Father saw the wolf eating the ox. He set a trap and caught it. A long

time after that I saw the tracks of two of 'em when I was back on the mountains deer hunting. They had been quite plenty here.

"The bears come out of their winter sleeping places just as soon as the snow melts off. They're usually fat then, but food is scarce until the berries git ripe in summer, and before that time the bears are pretty lean. In the spring they eat roots, and they'll tear a rotten log or stump all to pieces to git the big ants that are inside. Those ants are sour. I used to have a Frenchman workin' for me who liked the taste of 'em. He'd find 'em when he was chopping, and he'd take a handful out and eat 'em. He said they tasted just like pickles.

"Bears dig out yellow wasps' nests, and if they can git into a tree where there's honey they'll take that every time. They're great on beechnuts. In the fall they paw up the snow and leaves to git 'em. They like apples, and I've seen where they've climbed up and damaged a tree pretty bad, pulling in limbs and brushing 'em off to git the fruit. Bears are good climbers, but they can't climb a small tree. It's got to be big enough to hug or to hang onto with their claws. They eat a good many wild turnips; and oh Lord! those turnips are smarty—just like cayenne pepper. They're the greatest thing in the world for a cold. Dry your turnip and grate it and put it in hot water and sweeten it. Then you've got a drink that'll roll the sweat right out of you if you take a good dose.

"I've got a camp over on Gale River, and one of my bear traps is set there now. When I want to trap a bear I try to find two old logs that lie about three feet apart. Then I build up on top of 'em with other logs to a height of three feet or so. I drive in stakes and use wire to hold the logs in position and prevent 'em from falling down or being knocked down by the bear. Then I make a kind of a coop by plugging up one end of the passage between the logs. I put bait at the far end of the coop, and right in front of the bait set my trap. The bait is any old refuse that I can git at the meat market. Codfish is good, or salt pork, or lamb. Honey is best of all. The bears like that awfully well, but it's a little too expensive.

"I don't hitch the trap, because if I did the bear at his first jump would jerk his foot out. A bear is a drefful strong animal, and he's sure to git away unless you have a good holt on him. The trap itself weighs thirty pounds and has a chain five foot long hitched to it, and on the end of that is a three-clawed grapple which drags along and ketches on roots and things. The grapple hinders the bear so he won't go a great ways before he gits so tangled up he has to stop. He does some awful scratchin', tearin', and bitin'. Good land! I could show you the marks now made by one I caught two years ago.

"There's just as many bears in these mountains as there ever was, but they keep away from the villages and farms usually, and people seldom have a sight of

them. Besides, a bear does his stirring mostly at night. If they see you or smell you they git out of the way. Horses are all-fired afraid of 'em as a general thing. They can smell 'em half a mile. That's more than a man can do, but if you ketch one in a trap you can smell him all right.

"When a bear's cornered you want to keep right away from him. He's got sharp claws, and he can give an awful blow. Let him git a good stroke at a man and he'll take all the clothes off and some of the feller's hide, too. Worse than a cornered bear is one that's got cubs.

"A few years ago, in May, three of us were out a-fishing. We had a board shanty where lumbermen had been, not far from a road. One of the fellers was gittin' dinner, and I was in the camp layin' on the bed when a tramp come and told us that just up the road was two cubs and an old bear. He and another tramp had been going along the road, but when they saw the bears they didn't dast to go no farther. One of 'em stayed to keep track of the bears, and the other come running back to us. I took an old carbine we had, and we all went with him, but the animals wa'n't in sight, and the feller who was watchin' was so scat he didn't know where they'd gone nor nothin'.

"The tramps went right along. They didn't stop for no ceremony, and we hunted around till we found the cubs up a tree. We had a meal sack and a rope, and one of the fellers clim' the tree and got a noose over the head of one of the cubs and let him down. But the

cub squealed like a little snipe. He wa'n't used to that kind of handling.

"The feller that was with me on the ground suddenly dropped the bag. 'By George!' he yelled, 'there's the old bear!'

"I looked up the hill and saw her comin' pell-mell. My gun was right handy, and I grabbed it and fired. I didn't hit her, but she turned and run into the woods. We bagged the cubs pretty quick then and went back to camp with 'em. Later we brought 'em to town and tamed 'em. One was clever as a kitten, but you couldn't go near the other without his cuffing you with his paw if he could.

"About 1880 we had a bear hunt one Sunday morning right here in the village. It was in July, and the place was pretty well filled up with summer people. A feller went to his pasture to fix his fence and saw an old bear and three cubs, and he come after Father and me. We'd done more hunting than all the rest of the people in the town. I had a little dog that was half hound, and I took him with me to see if he'd foller the trail. The bears had gone farther back up on the hill, but the dog ran along smelling the tracks as if he'd always follered bears. We found 'em on the edge of the woods and shot the old bear the first thing. Then the dog took after one of the cubs, and the cub went up a tree. We shot him, and the dog chased another down toward the village and treed him so we shot him, too. The third got away.

"The people in the town heard the shooting and they found out in no time that we were after bears. Lots of 'em hustled up there on the hill—oh Lordy, yes! women and men both. A good many come out of church, and we had more of a congregation than the preachers did. There was a regular mob around the dead bears. The dog was the hero of the occasion. I kept him till he died of old age. If I had him today I wouldn't take a hundred dollars for him.

"The worst scrape I ever had with a bear was one time when a neighbor who lived a little out from the village come and wanted me to set a trap for a bear that was ketchin' his sheep. Every few nights the bear would git a sheep, and sometimes he'd eat a whole one at once. I found where he went out through what we call a slash or hedge fence. The fence is made by notching small trees at about the height of four feet so the tops will fall over but remain hanging on the stumps. Tops and stumps form a kind of windrow thick enough to keep the cattle from gittin' into the woods beyond.

"When the bear made a raid, as soon as he was back through the slash fence, he would stop and skin the sheep and eat it. A bear will skin a sheep as well as you could with a knife. Then he rolls the skin up and covers it roughly with sticks. The bear I was after had e't part of the last sheep he'd caught and left the rest, and I knew he'd return for it. I fixed the sheep in the bushes so he would have to come up in just one place to git it, and there I set my trap.

"A few days later word was sent that the bear had gone off with the trap. My father and I and two other fellers went to foller him. In them days we tied a clog of wood to the chain, and the bear had dragged it into a clump of spruces. We saw where he had reached up to bite the trees trying to git away. He'd take chunks right out of 'em, and he had torn up some that were as big as a stovepipe. The clog was hitched to a heavy cable chain, but he finally broke that chain and got away into the big woods where it was hard tracking him. He went round and round and criss-cross and every way. Sometimes he lay down. Then he'd git up and go on.

"We follered that bear much as ten mile before we saw or heard anything of him. He was on a mountain, and he started to run and the trap rattled on the stones that were there. A young feller named Brown and I were ahead, and we took after him and left the others behind. Just as soon as we come in sight of him he stopped and looked right at us. We stopped, too. He was a good big one, and he looked pretty sassy. I'd brought along a shotgun, and I took aim at one of his ears and shot six times. I knocked him down every time, but he jumped up afterward. Oh gorry! he'd git right up on his hind feet and snort like everything.

"I used up all my cartridges, and Brown and I went to work with our jackknives, and cut some clubs as big as my arm. We thought the bear was about dead. Brown struck him with his club on the nose but didn't

jar him a mite. It just made him all the madder. He run and stuck his head under a log. I pulled the bushes away to give him a swipe, but he dodged back. Then Prown whacked him and lost his balance. That gave the bear a chance to make a grab and put two of his tushes through Brown's wrist, and two through his hand. He made a snap just as a dog would and then let go.

"By that time Father and the other feller had got along. That feller was a man who would weigh two hundred pounds, and now he thought he'd try his hand. He took a club and struck that bear right over the top of the head. The only result was that the bear started for him. I sung out to him to git out of the way, and he did.

"'Twas almost dark then, and I told the others, 'You can play with that bear as much as you want to, but I'm done until I git more ammunition.'

"We all went down the mountain. Brown's wounds pained him terribly, and he like to have lost his hand before he got through. He never's been bear-hunting since.

"The next morning I went back to the mountain with the shotgun and about twenty men come along with me. The bear was gone, but after follering his trail half a mile we found him. He was among the rocks and ledges and slash where 'twas rougher'n blazes, and he had crawled into an old mess of logs. He riz up and I shot him. Then he started toward us, and the fellers

that was with me scattered every which way and clim' the trees. He didn't go but a few steps when I let him have one more charge, and that finished him.

"We hitched a rope to him and dragged him trap and all a mile or more out of the woods and then put him on a buckboard and brought him to town. He was a monster, but he only weighed three hundred pounds. There wasn't an ounce of fat on him. He was awful poor. I saved his hide, but the meat was no good. You couldn't eat a piece of it no more than you could the sole of your shoe it was so tough. He was a regular old racer."

The White Mountains include no less than twenty bold peaks and abound in wild valleys, deep gorges, lakes, and cascades. They were held in much reverence by the Indians who believed them to be the abode of the Great Spirit and affirmed that no one who scaled the sacred heights returned alive. This, however, did not prevent the first white who wandered into the region in 1642 from climbing Mount Washington, the noblest height of all. He found many crystals which he mistook for diamonds, and for a long time the mountains were called the "Crystal Hills." The first settlement among the mountains was made in 1792 by a hunter. About ten years later a small inn was built, but fifty years more passed before there were any hotels.

I was eager for a close acquaintance with the monarch of the mountains, and one morning I set forth on foot from Bretton Woods to scale it. The distance across the

lowlands to the base of the mountain was six miles, and nearly all the way the narrow road was hemmed in by forest. As I looked ahead the road seemed about to come to an end at every turn and to lead nowhere. It rarely afforded the least glimpse of the heights that I knew loomed so near. The only gaps were made by streams whose noisy waters writhed and leaped amid the ledges and boulders of the hollows. I constantly heard the birds calling in the vernal bowers around, and now and then there came to my ears the cheerful chatter of a chipmunk or squirrel. Sometimes I saw the hoofprints of a deer in the roadway. But I seldom caught sight of any of the forest animals either furred or feathered.

After I reached the foot of the mountain I went on beside the cog railway that ascends to the summit. For a mile or two the tracks were in the center of a broad grassy space cleared through the woodland, and there was a faint path in the sward so that the climbing was not especially arduous. Occasionally I stopped to rest and look back on the broad landscape of almost unending forest, and the maze of dreamy mountains that bounded the horizon.

As I went higher the route became rough and rocky, and I walked on the ties for the most part. The railroad was on a trestle only slightly above the level of the ground, unless it crossed a depression. But the ties were greasy and slippery and had gaping holes between them, and when the trestle was exceptionally high and

The Presidential Range from Bretton Woods

dizzy I abandoned it. A misstep would perhaps mean a broken leg, or a train might come along and make things awkward for me. So I preferred a tooth and nail scramble down below over the big angular rock fragments.

The trees steadily diminished in size, and at the height of three thousand feet they were not half as large as those in the valley. At four thousand feet they were mere shrubs, scraggly, stunted, and gray with age and shaggy moss. Presently even these pinched earth-hugging birches and spruces found the soil too thin and the warfare with the elements too strenuous, and there was nought but a dun waste of shattered, lichened rocks with intervals of coarse grass, moss, diminutive blueberry bushes, and a few dainty blossoms. The rock fragments of this blighted upper region looked as if they had lain there unchanged for ages. Roundabout were desolate forbidding heights frowning down on many a yawning gulf whose steep slopes were scarred with bare yellow streaks left by landslides.

Occasional patches of snow lingered on the upper slopes, and the air had grown much colder. A gusty chilling gale was blowing that threatened to carry me away bodily, and whenever I came to a sheltering ledge or water tank I hastened to get in its lee and catch my breath. The railway went up and up interminably as if it aspired to reach to heaven, but at last I saw a scattered group of buildings on ahead, and in a few minutes was at the summit. Sober clouds overhung

and sometimes enveloped it, and though the lowlands had their drifting patches of sunlight no ray struggled through on the mountain top.

A train had come up from below, and here and there were groups of sightseers in fluttering wraps. "This is the coldest place I ever came across," one of them was saying. "You need all your furs and winter clothes on. I want to look around, but every few minutes I have to go in and get warm."

The chief refuge was the Tip Top House which rested on the summit among the rocks like a stranded Noah's Ark. It is long and low, has walls of stone, and its roof is made secure by anchoring it with numerous cables and rods. There is plenty of need of having everything in trim for rough weather, for the wind has registered here the amazing velocity of one hundred and eighty-eight miles an hour. As to temperature the cold is capable of sending the mercury down to fifty degrees below zero.

The interior of the Tip Top House with its low ceilings and rude furnishings could hardly have been any more primitive when the building was erected in 1853. Long before that visitors had begun to come to the mountain in considerable numbers. A bridle path was cut to its top in 1819, and the next year some gentlemen stayed on the summit over night and named the different peaks. The cog railroad was completed in 1869.

I concluded to go down on the train. It consisted

of a single car and a curious caricature of an engine, both constructed to run on a steep slant. Presently the sightseers clambered into the car, and the dumpy engine got into motion for the three mile trip to the base. It crept along at a snail's pace with much hissing, creaking, and rumbling, as if fearful of losing its grip and making a wild dash down the mountain to destruction. Most of the passengers were cheerful and talkative, but there was one fat man who seemed to have been frozen stiff. His hat brim was turned down all around, and a sweater was wound about his neck. As he sat there silent and immovable, he had much the appearance of a mud turtle with its head almost withdrawn into its shell. We were nearly down the mountain before he began to show signs of life.

In the mild lower region there was little hint of the savage gale that blew at the summit, and I rambled away through the forest toward the Crawford Notch. It was warm on the sheltered roadways, and whenever a roadside sign informed me that a spring was near I was tempted to pause and drink a cooling draught. But always the vicinity of the springs was the lurking place of a horde of bloodthirsty midgets, flies, and mosquitoes, who quickly drove me back to the highway from the otherwise inviting nooks. I fared better when I sought for water in some woodland brook tinkling among its green, mossy stones.

One of the characters of the region whose fame has lived after him was a man commonly known as "English

Jack." "He was an awful rough old fellow," a local dweller explained to me. "He'd been at sea and got wrecked on an island where he had to eat snakes and frogs and roots, and all such things. If he could find a snake he'd take it to a hotel and eat it before the guests, and they'd give him money. His home was right at the rocky entrance to the Crawford Notch up in the woods just out of sight from the highway. There was a good path to it, and a sign by the roadside invited people to come to see 'The House that Jack Built.' Lots of folks would go up there and look around, and they'd pay him ten cents or a quarter or so apiece. He certainly was an odd old stick and a great talker, and I presume he told a good deal that wa'n't true. He had some trinkets to sell and a tame bear and a tank of big trout that he exhibited. One day he got boozy and went to foolin' with the bear, and, I snum! if help hadn't come Jack would have been killed. After being clawed so bad he had the bear shot."

The house was still standing, and when I approached the Notch I turned aside onto a path that led to it. This took me through woodland on the shadowed side of a hill where the air was cool and the light was dim and the surrounding forest full of eerie mystery, and then I came forth onto a grassy knoll brightened with sunlight. There stood a ruinous shack of curious architecture with the forest boughs throwing out protecting arms over it. The walls were partly of logs and partly of odds and ends of boards. Inside was a chaos

of broken furniture and rubbish, and the whole house was disintegrating and threatening to fall to pieces.

Up in the heart of the Notch occurred in 1826 the most noteworthy tragedy of the mountains. An occasional life has been lost in winter storms, and there have been some serious accidents to travellers on the roads, but the catastrophe in the Notch excels all others in its appeal to the imagination. Here was a rustic inn occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Willey, their five children and two hired men. At dusk on the 20th of August a storm burst on the mountains and raged with great fury through the night. Every tiny stream became a torrent, and the valleys were flooded, and the roads were impassable.

Two days later a traveller succeeded in getting to the Willey House, which he found standing in woeful desolation. An avalanche of earth, rocks, and trees had descended from the mountain and barely missed carrying it away. When the traveller pushed open the door a dog disputed his entrance and howled mournfully. The lonely cabin had no other inmates. Beside the beds lay the clothing of the members of the household, indicating a hasty and frightened flight. Apparently they had become aware of the danger that threatened, and had run forth seeking safety only to be overwhelmed. If they had remained in the house they would not have been harmed, for the avalanche divided a little back of the dwelling and rushed by on either side leaving the frail structure standing, though

some of the débris struck it with sufficient force to move it slightly from its foundations. The bodies of Mr. and Mrs. Willey were found later, but not those of the rest of the household. For twenty-one miles down the valley the turnpike was demolished, and more than a score of bridges were swept away. Some of the meadows were buried several feet deep with earth and rocks, and there were great barricades of trees that had been torn up by the roots.

From the Crawford Notch I walked back to Bretton Woods where I arrived just after sunset. But beyond the dusky lowlands a warm glow lingered on the big blue heights of the Presidential Range that bulwarked the east, while above them were clouds delicately flushed with tints of rose and saffron.

Notes.—The manifold attractions of the mountains can only be appreciated by making an extended stay. The central group of heights is called the Presidential Range from the fact that the various peaks are named after the early presidents. Next in importance are the neighboring Franconia Mountains. On the eastern side of Mount Washington the only highway up the mountain starts from Glen House, eight miles south of Gorham. Automobiles can make the ascent. Accommodations are provided at the summit for persons who wish to stay overnight. One of the clefts in the mountains which particularly deserves a visit is Dixville Notch, which with its crags and pinnacles is more Alpine in character than any other portion of the granite hills. The roads are in the main excellent, though the grades are sometimes steep. The intending visitor should have a good guidebook and some of the attractive pamphlets published by the railroads.

IV

A NEW HAMPSHIRE PARADISE

I WAS at Windsor on the Vermont bank of the Connecticut approaching an old covered toll bridge, which I planned to cross, for on the opposite side of the river was the paradise. But the sky was gloomy with clouds, and rain began to fall. Even paradise, I was afraid, might be somewhat unsatisfactory in a downpour, and I betook myself to the shelter of the tollgate-keeper's piazza adjacent to the bridge entrance. The keeper himself sat there on guard watching the teams and individuals coming and going. He usually called out a greeting to those who went past, but only occasionally did he collect toll.

"It's like this," he explained; "most of the local people buy yearly passes at from two to fifteen dollars according to the amount of crossing they do. That gives the right of way to a man's teams and all his family. Now and then I have a little dispute as to what is a fair rate. One woman told me this spring she just wouldn't pay what I charged. 'Well,' I says, 'you can make up your mind on which side of the river you want to stay, and then you can stay there. You can't cross this bridge.'

"So she paid. For footmen we have a lump rate of

ten cents a month. To cross a single time we charge a man two cents, but most of them pay three cents to go over and back. A good deal of our business is due to a saloon near the other end of the bridge. There's prohibition on our side of the river, and a pile of men go over there every day to get their bitters. Take it Saturday night, and there's a string of 'em all the time, and they don't give a hurrah what the weather is. They can buy the liquor any way they want it, from a glass to a barrel. The saloon bottles up and ships off a good deal to the prohibition towns, and it makes more money than all our merchants here in Windsor put together. But it has to be pretty careful and quiet or it would get shut up. I never saw that business handled so decently, and they rarely let a man drink so much that he makes trouble.

"I don't have much trouble, anyway. Once in a while I see a team coming across trotting, and then I drop the gate down and collect a two dollar fine, though if the party is ugly about it we may kind o' compromise. You see where the gate has been mended. I dropped it one time to stop a runaway; but I won't try that again. The horse smashed right through, and a little farther along two fellers thought they could bring the horse to a standstill by holding up a blanket. That didn't do any good either. The horse kept straight on and tore the blanket all to tatters.

"There's ten more just such toll bridges as this on the river between Vermont and New Hampshire. They

The toll-gate at the entrance to the bridge

belong to private companies. I suppose the public ought to own 'em so travel would be free, and there's attempts being made to bring that about. The state legislatures have tackled the subject, but New Hampshire owns to high-water line on this side of the river and most the whole length of the bridges is on New Hampshire territory. The benefits would be equal; but the two states don't agree about the proportion each ought to pay to buy out the bridge companies. Then, too, the advantages gained would be almost wholly for those who lived close by. The other parts of the state don't see any gain for them, and they're inclined to fight being taxed for such a purchase. So there's a hitch and a haul and we don't get nowhere.

"This bridge was built about forty years ago. The one we had before was washed away in a big flood. That was in February 1866. An ice jam formed below here, and the water dammed back and lifted off the bridge. It hung together long enough as it went down stream to smash a hole through the next covered bridge, but the ice and water finally tore it all to pieces."

In the midst of the shower the tollgate-keeper called out to a man in a buggy, "A little damp this morning, ain't it?"

"Yes, in some places," the man responded cheerfully.

When the scud was over he greeted another passer with the query, "Is it done raining, Tom?"

"I do' know," Tom said. "May be letting go to get

a new hold. It looks promising enough just now, but I bet you we're goin' to get some more."

One individual who drove by was a peddler of hulled corn. "And he sells quite a little around," the gatekeeper observed. "But I don't relish it. They do the hulling now with soda, and the corn ain't got that lye taste the old-fashioned sort had. I can remember as a boy how my grandmother used to take a bag of wood ashes and put it right in the kittle with the corn, and her hulled corn tasted first-rate. We e't it with milk."

The sun was now shining brightly down on the wet earth, and I paid the keeper of the tollgate three cents and went across the bridge to Cornish. Somewhere in the township, far back from the river, there is a village; but it is not in the paradise portion, and no one seemed to know exactly where Cornish village is. I did not attempt to discover it myself; for I was quite content with the region in which I then was. The combination of pleasant vales and big irregular hills is so charming that it has taken the fancy of a gradually increasing colony of artists and authors, and of certain other persons who have taste and wealth, if not genius. Cultivated fields and pastures intermit with patches of woodland where the trees grow undisturbed to full stature. Streams of varying size abound, and to the southward rises the mighty form of Mount Ascutney, a lonely blue peak that presides over and lends dignity to the scene. The giant mountain did not at any time fully reveal itself on my first day in the region. Even

after nearly the whole sky had cleared it continued to sleep among the clouds, and a cloud cap was still resting on the summit when night came.

It was early September, and the grasses and other wild growths formed rank tangles along the borders of the roads and fields. Conspicuous in this plant-world jungle were the podded milkweeds and the blossoms of the wild sunflowers, asters, goldenrods, and stout-stemmed thistles. Another characteristic of the beginning of autumn was the astonishing abundance of insect life. The air was everywhere melodious with tiny trills and pipings, and at midday the cicadas shrilled their long-drawn song of heat. If I crossed a field a squad of grasshoppers leaped away each time I took a step, and I found insects of some sort in every nook and cranny that I chanced to observe. Once I paused to look at a clump of goldenrod. Numerous flies and many-colored bugs and bees haunted its flower-clusters. But these honey-hunters did not comprise all the insects present there; for down below, amid the leaves and stems, certain bloodthirsty spiders had spread their snares and, head downward, in the middle of their nets, they waited for such of the unwary lovers of the bloom as might happen to blunder into their traps. Evidently paradise was not all it might be among these little wild folk and I suppose it is only the human residents who feel the uplift of the beautiful environment.

Some of the city people who have chosen to own

homes in this region stay merely during the warm weather, and others through the entire year. Each family has selected the spot that most appealed to them amid the medley of rough pastures, wooded hollows and old farm fields, and has there erected a mansion and turned the immediate vicinity into an oasis of lawn and garden, fountains and terraces, hedgerows, and ornamental trees and shrubbery. These homes and their surroundings are often wonderfully charming, and some of the gardens with their tints of rainbow are like bits of fairyland; but the landscape as a whole continues half-wild, and the intervals between the widely scattered mansions are for the most part ordinary farming country.

A few of the old farms have been bought entire, but more often the purchase is of a comparatively limited number of acres. To quote one of the natives, "Most of these people don't care about bein' near their neighbors or livin' on a main highway, or even about owning good land. It seems to suit 'em best if they can put up a house way off in a pasture. They'll buy the rockiest, meanest land we've got—the very worst spots that are to be had. It's strange, ain't it, goin' off in a pasture to live; but they must like it, I suppose. Last year a new man bought a patch of that rough land and paid six thousand dollars for it. The farmer 'twas bought of had been quite a lot in debt; but he got twice what his whole place was naturally worth, and since then he's been aboveboard. Of course everybody

knew the price that was paid, and the assessors tried to tax the buyer at that rate instead of what the land had been paying in the past. They were a little too cunning and they slipped up in that scheme. If they hadn't pushed on to him so hard they'd been all right; but he wouldn't pay the bill they sent him and said he'd spend twenty thousand dollars fighting 'em before he'd stand such a tax. So they finally backed down.

"When a city family comes and builds a house and settles in it, you might think they'd got everything right and the place fixed up for good; but they ain't contented to leave well enough alone. They're always improving and changing, tearing down, and adding on. They are sure to spend a great deal more than they expected 'twould cost 'em when they started. I know one man who's spent ten times what he intended to lay out. He made his first mistake by putting up his house way off in the woods. There hain't no other fine house anywhere near him. In order to connect with the highway he built a road down the side of the ridge on which his house stands. That road cost him a thousand dollars, and it couldn't be used, after all, it was so steep. His cellar, too, was a big expense. It is blasted out of the solid rock. I'll give you one more instance which shows his way of managing. He set out an orchard, and it was doing first-class; but a friend of his told him it ought to be somewhere else. So he pulled it up and changed it to another location."

From where we were standing we could see one of

these handsome modern country mansions a mile or two away across the rude uplands. It had a delightful perch on the summit of a lofty hill overlooking the lower hills and wooded glens far and near, and its white-walled magnificence with Lombardy poplars standing sentinel about was quite enchanting.

"A woman built that place," my companion said. "When she first looked around in this region she selected a spot over to the eastward right up on a pine knob; but after she'd bought it she discovered that it had no water. She paid a pretty good price for the sake of having a piece of pine timber. It wouldn't do for her house site, and then she got this hill yonder. She was a genius—quite a poet; but in the course of a few years she died, and her sister became the owner of the property. This sister wa'n't gifted like the other woman, and yet if she got excited you might think she was gifted, too. Let her have the idea that the butcher was charging her two cents a pound more than his meat was worth, and she'd step right out and tell him what she thought of such doin's. Oh, she was fluent, and if he tried to explain, she wouldn't listen, but kept straight on till she'd said her say. Then she'd turn around and march into the house.

"Look down there toward the low ground. Just where the woods end is a big field with cattle in it. Those are Mrs. Churchill's cows—that is, everybody calls 'em her cows. She's the farmer and the business man of the family. Mr. Churchill is something of a

politician, and a smart, nice feller, but kind of aristocratic. He tries his best to be easy and companionable with us ordinary people; and yet that aristocraticness crops out in spite of thunder. He started in to run for governor last year, and he rattled the thing up good, I gorry! They defeated him, but they ain't got him quieted yet.

"His house is over in the woods beyond where the cows are, and it's a fine one, I tell you. I often wonder that he didn't buy better land while he was about it. That farm is nothing but an old sandbank, anyway. Gracious! you can't raise a decent crop on it, the land is so terrible poor, and in some places the soil won't even grass over. Yes, and this dry season has pretty much knocked Mrs. Churchill out in the farming line.

"Of course all these new folks that have come in here are very different in their tastes and interests from us, and we don't associate much with them except as we do work about their places. Now, last night they got up an entertainment and give it in a hall in the village just north of here. Tickets was two dollars apiece, and they had singing and tableaux and a play; and every darn thing was in French. 'Twa'n't for the world's people. You might think we'd meet 'em at church, but they are not a church-going class—at least not here in the country. They spend Sundays playing cards or doing anything else that happens to strike them, and Sunday nights they have parties.

"In one way, though, they have really taken hold

with us—and that is in starting a village industry business among our women. They've got the thing going and it's a success. Making artistic rugs is the main work. One of the leaders of the rug-making circle lives in the first little house up the road. Call in and ask her about it. She c'n tell you more'n the Almighty, and there's nothin' pleases her so much as to unwind."

Another of the local dwellers had now joined us, and he asked, "But will she stop when she gets run down?"

"I never stayed long enough to find out that," the first man replied. "However, they've got quite an industry and no mistake."

The opinions this man expressed of the newcomers and their homes and habits interested me scarcely less than the region itself, and when I met others of the original occupants of the vicinity I pursued the subject further. In particular I had a long chat one evening with a man I came across fishing in a little millpond near the road I was travelling. First he enlightened me as to the luck he was having.

"I ain't ketchin' nothin'," he said, "and I wish I'd gone to the river. The children are always teasin' me to go there, and I usually get a nice mess to bring home. One bass I ketched weighed five pounds. A few weeks ago when I was gettin' more'n I wanted to eat I put a pickerel and a bass into the watertub at the place where I work. Fish are a dreffful nice thing in a watertub. They keep every bug and worm out. If a

The fisherman

fly gets on the surface, it won't be no time before you'll hear that water splash, and the fly's eaten. It's fun to see them fish swim round in there. I feed 'em bread. That's the best thing for fish; but once in a while I get 'em some shiners, and if I throw in just a single one both the two big fish get hold of it, and they'll fight terrible before either one'll give up.

"I ain't workin' today, and I s'pose my boss won't like it; for help is awful skurce. Since these city people have settled here a laboring man needn't never be out of a job unless he wants to be, and he is sure of good wages and his pay every Saturday night. They've made a big change in the look of things, and if the folks who was here forty years ago was to come back they wouldn't hardly know where they was. Those old-time houses was quite different from what you see now; but the people who lived in 'em knew how to farm. We don't raise any such quantities of corn and grain and hay as they did. The land needs takin' up and cultivating once in four or five years to get real good crops. But now a great many of the fields are mowed year after year and never teched with a plough. All that the present owners care to do is just to keep things about so. They ain't farmin' to make money, and they don't quarter pay expenses.

"It suits 'em to own fine cattle, and where I'm workin' they've got a cow-stable that's better and cleaner than lots of houses. We scrub it out with brooms and water every day, and the cows have their

bags washed and wiped before they are milked. Each cow's milk is kept separate and weighed and recorded. The herd gets the best of feed, and the milk is richer than the average and ought to bring a better price, but it all goes to the creamery at five cents a quart same as any farmer's.

"There's a lot of nice chickens and turkeys on the place. I believe the turkeys count up sixty-five in all. One of the old ones stole a nest and hatched out sixteen. That brood is kind o' wild and ain't been to the house yet. Turkeys are great hands to eat grasshoppers and crickets, and they'll go through a field just like a company of soldiers keeping abreast of each other and cleaning up every insect as they go. When we are mowing, the machine drives the bugs and things toward the center of the field and they are very thick in the patch of grass that still stands after we get most done. The turkeys seem to know they can find more there than anywhere else, and when we near the finish they take a swath and follow just as fast as we mow.

"Very few of the farmers I used to know are here now—and you can't blame 'em for lettin' their land go when they was gettin' such high prices for it."

The most notable member of the colony which discovered and in large part made this New Hampshire countryside the paradise that it is, was the sculptor, Augustus St. Gaudens. He had recently died, at the time of my visit, and I heard many reminiscences illustrating his characteristics. The rural folk all had

a warm affection for him, and in their way eulogized him as highly as could the sculptor's intimate associates in his own realm.

"St. G. was a number one man," a Cornish resident I encountered in my rambles affirmed. "He never put on any airs, and in meeting and talking with the people that live around here he seemed to be one of us. He was just as companionable and simple, too, with the servants who worked for him, and often they come near forgetting he was their employer. I recollect how he once helped some servants who'd just got here, strangers from the city, to find their way. They were walking to one of the big houses where they were goin' to work, and when they got there they told how they'd met 'a real nice old gentleman' down the road who gave them directions through the woods. That nice old gentleman was St. Gaudens.

"It was his habit to have his own servants come into his studio just before any work of his was goin' to be shipped away so they could see it. One time when everything was ready to take down a new statue, and the workmen were settin' around waitin', two or three of the maids was busy in the house and couldn't come right then. Some of Mr. St. Gauden's family thought it was pretty expensive waiting with the pay of the workmen running on, and that the job ought to be started at once; but the sculptor wouldn't hear of touching a thing till all the servants could get there to see the statue.

"He was very patient, usually, and he'd hear the most long-winded caller to the end without showing a sign of irritation, when I knew he was so nervous he couldn't hardly hold himself together. But he wa'n't afraid to speak in meeting if he got riled, and those who knew him at all knew enough not to speak to him when he was studying.

"His work brought him a good deal of money; but I guess he spent it most as fast as it came to him. He was always doing things over about his place. If he thought some stone steps would improve a terrace, he got seventeen or eighteen men and had the steps put in. Then pretty soon he'd think they'd be better somewhere else, and he'd have his gang of men come and tear up where he wanted the steps moved to, and after the moving was done they'd turf over the old place. That's the way things would go, and it was the same in his studio—he was sure to be a great while finishing a piece of work because he was forever thinkin' he could improve it.

"There never was a man more generous. For instance, he was comin' home from Windsor one winter day, and he drove along to where a poor family lived and saw four of the children sliding down hill. But they only had one sled, and he says, 'Is that all the sled you've got?'

"They says, 'Yes;' and what does he do but turn smack around and go back to Windsor and buy three sleds so those children would have one apiece.

Old-time natives

"Then I know one time when a man who'd worked for him a number of years was goin' to move away, and St. G. says to him, 'I've never felt as if I paid you enough;' and he took his check-book and wrote him a check for one hundred dollars.

"In the latter part of his life he hadn't been well for a long time and he suffered a good deal of pain; but when he first come here he was as well as any one, and he'd go out and play ball and was one of the boys among boys. He never complained, no matter how he suffered. One peculiar thing was that he was always cold, poor man. There might be a great big fire in the fireplace and the furnace goin' for all it was worth, and his wife would be roasted, and yet he was cold.

"Well, he's gone now, and his body was cremated, and his ashes are buried over in Windsor. He wanted 'em sprinkled over the flower-garden; but you know, if they'd done that they never could rent the place. Yes, he's gone, and he was a number one man. I don't suppose we shall ever see his like here again."

Notes.—Cornish is in a region that is distinctly rustic, far from any big town, and with much in life and nature around that is raw and half wild; yet here you find many magnificent estates of people of wealth and fame including statesmen, authors, and artists, and it has even been the summer home of a president of the United States. Mount Ascutney, 3,320 feet high, is one of the striking features of the vicinity. Twenty miles north is Hanover, the seat of Dartmouth College, where Daniel Webster graduated. The main roads in the region are good gravel or dirt. The less said about the others the better.

V

ON THE SHORES OF LAKE CHAMPLAIN

WHEN I looked on the map and saw, adjacent to the Vermont shore of the lake, Grand Isle with the towns of North Hero and South Hero on it, the romantic appeal of those names was irresistible, and thither I journeyed. I soon learned that "Grand" referred to size, not scenery, and I failed entirely to discover the significance of the two "Heroes"; yet, my acquaintance with the undulating, rich-soiled, well-tilled island was nevertheless very satisfying. The place I chose to stop at was a rustic village on one of the ridges where the scattered homes reposed amid shade trees and orchards. I lodged in a stone-walled old hotel at a cross-roads, and just across the way was a wooden store before which a number of farm teams were usually to be seen hitched while their owners traded inside and swapped the news of the neighborhood. Most of the teams had been driven in from the region surrounding to bring milk to the creamery, for dairying is a chief source of income. Great herds of cows grazed in the pastures, and alfalfa was growing on many broad fields to furnish feed for them.

One afternoon I called on an old resident of the vicinity, a man eighty years of age. While we talked

he sat by the dining-room stove with a cat in his lap. His wife, who had been blind and deaf for several years, presently came feeling her way to him from the next room. She had somehow sensed the fact that he had a caller, and wanted to know who was there. He replied in a sign language on her fingers, and she went back to the other room.

I questioned my host about conditions on the island as he had known them in his youth, and he said: "When I was a boy this country was much wilder than it is now and lynx still lived in the woods. They wa'n't afraid to tackle sheep and made considerable trouble for us. A lynx was an ugly feller to handle if you got him cornered. Once our geese got away, and I went to the lake lookin' for 'em. While I was there I saw a lynx slide down the rocks to the edge of the water, and I watched him lickin' it up. Afterward he ran back up the rocks. I wa'n't old enough to be out on a hunt, with a gun, but some of the men follered the lynx and shot him in a swamp. Later they had him at the store stuffed.

"I can recollect too, when I was a youngster, we had quite a stir about a wolf. It was in winter, and they chased him with hounds over the ice to another island, but he got away. There used to be lots of eagles around, and we'd see 'em flying day after day, or sitting on a dry tree. We still have a fair number of foxes and they do a bad business for people that keep turkeys.

"Great flocks of wild geese used to fly over, and

they'd stop in the marshes and buckwheat fields. When I'd be out milking the cows in the yard in the spring, I could hardly look up without seeing ducks or geese going north. I often killed 'em. Sometimes we'd ketch 'em alive and tame 'em to put out as decoys. One man here had a tame wild goose that went away in the fall with a wild flock, and after two years it come back. They always fly in a V shape with the old gander ahead. If you can shoot him first you have a chance to fire several times at the others. They're all mixed up and keep flying round and round to get another leader. While they're travelling they're sure to be squawking, and when they plan to light they're still squawking as they circle about to see if the coast is clear. But as soon as they've lit they're all still. If they're in a buckwheat field you won't hear a sound, and the old gander will be watchin' every minute with his head up while the rest are eatin'.

"Our farm ran to the lake, and we had a splendid fishing-ground. When there come a lowery day we and some of the neighbors would go down and draw a seine. We'd perhaps take along a two gallon jug of hard cider, and we'd have quite a visit and a good time. I don't recall that the cider had any bad effect. To get drunk on cider a feller would have to be quite an h-o-g. He'd have to swill down a lot of it. We caught pike and pickerel and muscallonge and shiners and suckers, and we'd get perch by the quantity. It wouldn't be possible to make any such hauls now. The law has got

The waterside — Lake Champlain

the thing cornered down so you can't ketch small fish, but the lake is pretty well drained of 'em, big and little. We threw back what we didn't want. Some we salted down. We still eat a good many lake fish, but there's none of 'em taste as good to me as they did when I was a boy.

"I think I'll have to take a pull at my pipe. I smoke occasionally and sometimes oftener. Seven or eight years ago I smoked one cigaret. I've never wanted any since. That cured me.

"Talking about changes, we used to get our mail once a week. Later, when we got it twice a week we felt as if we lived in the city. Now we have rural delivery every day, and I'm expectin' the next thing they'll send some one along to read our letters to us.

"The main part of farming here in my young days was keeping sheep. Lots of farmers had two or three hundred and sheared 'em for their wool. Now we've shifted to cows, and that's been a big thing for us. It's knocked the mortgage off from a good many farms. Our cream is taken to the coöperative creamery, and when our cows get old we sell 'em for beef, and there's a rendering company that will pay us something for our sick cows. The meat of those sick cows ain't supposed to be eaten, but I guess some of it gets mixed in with good meat and goes where it hadn't ought to go.

"Of course not everybody's prosperous. Some owe money that they can't pay and drop behind a little every year. When they get going that way they're

pretty sure to have a slide into bankruptcy. The people they owe get uneasy. If a man is gaining and going up it's all right, but if he's going down it's all wrong.

"One cause of failures is this auto business. A man working for a salary in such a place as Burlington over here on the mainland will have a little home that's paid for and he's quite comfortably fixed. But he concludes that he's got to have an auto to keep up with the procession. So he mortgages his place and buys one. Then he has to take a day off here and a day off there to make trips in his new machine. By and by his employer says, 'Well, I'll have to look for another feller to fill this man's place;' and he loses his job. In town and country both there's a good many people with autos who wish they had their money back. It ain't the first cost that counts. It's the wear and tear and the expense for ensilage—no, that ain't the word. I mean gasolene. It balked me just for the second. My mind don't work as good as it used to.

"Have you noticed our apple orchards? This is a great region for apples, but the tent caterpillars and little green forest worm are raising the mischief with the trees. The leaves are about all gone and the orchards look as if a fire had been through 'em. They've mostly turned into butterflies now and quit eating, but they've left their mark and they're goin' to play the trees out.

"The railroad has built causeways to get on and off the island, and we go across in teams at the sandbar

bridge. We've got pretty good connections with the rest of the world except at the end of winter. Then, after the ice gets rotten enough to break up, it will sometimes shove, and the ice and floodwood will be piled up on the causeway at the bridge in such masses that the road is blocked for three weeks. Before the bridge was built we would ford the bar in the spring when the water was so high that the horse had to wade for a mile, and we'd put our feet on the dashboard to keep 'em dry. I didn't want to be driving through after dark very much. If you got to one side a little it was dangerous. In summer I've been across when the water was so low that I could wade it with such a pair of boots on as I'm wearing now.

"Most every one is rigged out with shoes these days, but I ain't ashamed to have anybody know that I wear boots. People say to me, 'Why, you wear boots yet!' and I say, 'Yes, I was born with boots on.'

"I like 'em better than shoes. They're handier. I can't get down to lace up shoes, and besides if you wear shoes on a farm some obstruction is getting into 'em every little while, and the thistles prick through your pantlegs. But I don't know as I've seen anybody who's stuck to boots as I have, and there's only one place in Burlington where they can be got. Every one wore 'em in old times. Even the girls wore 'em by spells going to school through the snow in winter and the slush in spring.

"Once a year a shoemaker, on his rounds about the

neighborhood, would move into a room of our house and make boots for the whole family. We had one shoemaker here in town who couldn't be beat in New York City, and he had some very stylish customers who lived large places at a distance—fellers that looked just as if they'd come out of a bandbox. He'd fit 'em with boots that were so tight they'd break three or four pairs of galluses tryin' to get 'em on.

"We had a good deal of Canadian help in summer. Men would drive down from Canada in a two-wheeled cart drawn by one horse. There'd be six or eight of 'em standing up or sitting around on the edges of the cart. They'd get along any way to reach the States and work four or five weeks for a dollar a day. Now we have to pay two dollars a day. You pretty near have to pay a man if you stop him to inquire if he'll work for you. They're educated to get as big prices as they can and give as little as possible in return. We used to go out and in half an hour hire half a dozen men. Now you can't hire one man in half a dozen days. The laboring day was calculated from sunrise to sundown. At present, if you get a man out before seven o'clock you have to pull him out, but we expect him to keep at his work more steadily than if his hours were longer; and there ain't no use talking—a feller can't hold out from sunrise to sundown in a long summer day and do good work. The men had to have a lunch in the middle of the morning, and again in the middle of the afternoon. I've carried many a lunch to the mowing field

when I was a boy. The food was put into a market basket or wooden pail together with a bottle of liquor and a couple of tumblers. Toward ten o'clock in the morning a worker would sit down and eat a doughnut and a good slice of bread buttered and doubled up, and drink a tumbler of liquor. That would hold him together until dinner time. Now and then there was hot biscuit for lunch and perhaps cake.

"Mowing was done with scythes. All the men would mow in the morning until the dew got off. There'd be six or seven of 'em, and at the end of a swath they'd stop and whet their scythes and tell a story or two and have a laugh before they went on. We had more fun then working than we do now. Some of the men mowed all day, but most of 'em quit mowing after a while to get the hay dry and into the barn. It was quite a job to spread out the swaths that were left by the mowers. Furthermore all the hay had to be raked by hand. While I was a youngster they sent me ahead to rake the first swath. Two fellers raking on each side completed what was called a windrow, and the hay in the windrows had to be bunched up and pitched onto the two-wheeled ox-carts.

"Everybody used to have oxen, but now I don't know of a yoke of oxen in town. An ox-team will do lots of work if properly managed. It will do as much ploughing as a span of horses. But if you use the gad too much and get your oxen vexed and they don't know what to do they'll be mean same as a balky horse.

Some of our horses and cattle are superior to the human animals that own 'em. I saw a man pounding a horse the other day, and I said to myself, 'If I was that horse I'd show the feller how the calks were fastened on my shoes,' and it would have been serving him right.

"Before the railroads got so numerous there used to be a great deal of traffic on the lake. The water was dotted with schooners and sloops up to twenty-five years ago. You couldn't look out on the lake without seeing ten or a dozen of 'em. Now we don't see one a week. Most of the crossing at the ferries was done in what we called old scow boats. They was rigged with a big sail. We get some heavy waves on the broad part of the lake, and I've even known one of those flat-bottomed scow boats to be upset.

"Most of our teaming in winter was done on the ice. The ice made a good road, and the horses would slide right along. The lake froze from shore to shore, but here where it is so wide there was only crossing for a few days or weeks, however cold the season. Horses often broke through, but they seldom drowned. If a man was alone and his horses went in he'd have to wait for help, and about all he could do was to keep the horses' heads up. When a man on shore heard any one calling and saw that a team was in trouble he'd hitch up, put a plank in his cutter, and go to the rescue. Sometimes those would come who were so scairt that they were worse than no one at all. If you could get the horses' for'ard feet up on the ice they'd usually

struggle out themselves. Often we'd choke 'em a little and get 'em strangled to make 'em throw themselves out. But if the ice was rotten or springy they were apt to slip back in. The ice was weak around the reefs, and we would keep away from them. There ain't but very little teaming now, and I didn't hear of only two teams getting in last winter.

"When I was a boy 'twas a main travelled road through here. That made quite a market for the hotels, and there was lots of doings at the corners. Travellers couldn't get by a hotel without stopping for a drink. They had to have it in winter to get warmed up on, and in summer to get cooled off on. They drank gin or brandy or whatever their thirst called for, but most of what was known as 'new rum.' That was a little cheaper than the other kinds of liquor, and the stores bought it by the puncheon, and people bought it by the jugful. Everybody drank. Even the minister wasn't afraid to tip the tumbler.

"I can recollect long strings of horses from Canada going through here to be sold every winter. Usually there'd be twenty or thirty horses in a string, but sometimes there was so many they'd reach for pretty near half a mile. Their halters was tied to a rope that extended from the leader to the last horse. A man rode the leader, and several boys were scattered along on the horses, and a sleigh follered behind.

"You notice we have a good many zigzag rail fences around our fields, but we don't make any new fences

of that sort. Rails are getting scarce nowadays. They're split out of cedar, and there ain't much cedar growing. It's a bother even to get enough cedar posts for wire fences. Every field large and small used to be fenced, and we had to keep a good fence along the road because people let their cattle run and feed in the highways. There'd be gates across the roads in some places that travellers had to open and shut. On either side of the rail fences at the angles a stake was driven down, and a short board with holes bored in it was slipped over the ends of each pair of stakes to hold 'em in place, and a top rail rested on this cap.

"We generally made our hog pasture fence of boards. Hogs will root under most any fence, and they'll squeeze pretty hard on a board when they get started. Those old-time hogs was great runners. Now what we call a hog decent to be e't is so fat he can't do much running. But I've seen hogs that we wanted to butcher get away and run all over the garden. We'd set the dog onto 'em to help tire 'em out so we could ketch 'em. Once a Frenchman who was working for us grabbed hold of a hog by the ear when it started to run and got right on its back. But it ran through a gooseberry bush. You know what those are. They've got thorns on 'em. The hog came out first best and the man got well scratched. He let go and talked all kinds of language for a short time.

"A poor line fence makes trouble for you unless you have a pretty good lot of philosophy to fall back on.

At work in the garden

People generally cal'erate to look after their fences now, but in earlier days they often neglected 'em, and their cows or sheep or horses would do damage on their neighbors' premises. That stirred up feeling, and there was jawing and cursing and perhaps a fight. Some never got over it. Such affairs made work for the lawyers.

"We always had a lawyer in town ever since I was knee high to a johnnycake until about thirty years ago. If he saw a little disturbance starting between neighbors he'd work on the one that he thought would crowd the most so as to get a fee out of the row. While we had lawyers there was always lots of quarrelling, but when they quit doing business here it cured the thing right up.

"The cases were tried on the island, and Pixley, the constable, had to collect the juries. One day I see his old sorrel mare comin' up the road, and I knew, just as well as if he had telephoned, that he was goin' to summon me for a little petty suit. So I went in and sat down in my shirtsleeves with my boots off and my feet on the stove hearth and an old tippet round my throat as if I was played out. Pixley stopped and come in, but I couldn't talk out loud. All my answering was done by whispering or nodding. Well, I didn't lie, but you might just as well call it that.

"'I declare!' Pixley said, 'you got an awful cold,' and he went off to look for some one else.

"By and by I hitched up and went to see the case

tried. I left my horse under the store shed and walked into court. The constable saw I'd tricked him, and he said, 'Next time I go after you you'll come even if I have to take you right out of bed.'

"'Pixley,' I said, 'you ain't big enough.'

"We lived rather more than two miles from the church, and a load of us would drive there to meeting in a three-seated wagon. The church pews were regular pens. If we had 'em in a barn we'd call 'em box stalls. The walls were so high that when I was a little shaver and wanted to make faces at any other boy or girl I had to stand up on the seat to look over. The pews had doors and the last person in had to turn a button to keep the door shut. There were no cushions—nothing but the bare boards, unless you carried a shawl or something to sit on.

The minister preached a sermon in the morning, and then he had to give us another in the afternoon, and there wa'n't hardly a person in a hundred could digest what there was in one. When those old-fashioned ministers preached a sermon they couldn't usually get along without bringin' in about hell fire two or three times. That would scare some, but others would have to laugh right in church, and people used to joke on the subject. If a man said: 'I ain't goin' to winter here. I'm goin' to get where it's warmer;' some one else would say, 'Well, you wait a little while and you'll be where it's warmer.'

"Between the two services there was time for Sunday-

school and lunch. The people who came from a distance ate their cake and cheese and whatever else they brought in the vestibule or right in the pews, but the children would perhaps take a handful of the food and go outdoors to eat.

"We kept our minister for fifty years. He could have got four or five times what we paid, but he said he was one of us and wouldn't leave for the big offerings. For funeral sermons or anything of that kind he was in demand all around. He was one of the flowery kind, and even if the dead person had been mean and done bad things he'd smooth it over, or if the feller had never amounted to anything the preacher would make him out to be quite a man, and that caused the man's friends like the preacher better than ever. He'd fix it so nice in speaking about the deceased in the funeral sermon that though parties were there who'd been quarrelling with the departed tears would start from their eyes just the same. The minister lived to be a very old man, and it was only a few years ago he had the sickness that upset him.

"The island used to be full of children, but the young people as they grew up went West, and they went South, and they went to the towns. Some have probably done a good deal better than if they'd stayed, and yet I think the majority would have been fully as independent and enjoyed themselves more if they'd continued to live on the farms here."

Another acquaintance who furnished me with considerable information was an elderly French fisherman

whose home was a queer little shack in some bushes near the shore. The structure was about six by eight feet with a tarred paper roof. Near by was a garden in which the fisherman raised a few vegetables, and just over an adjacent fence was an apple orchard much devastated by worms.

"I had to kill them worms here all day one spell," he said. "They're kind of a brown color and an inch and a half long, and I guess they got a thousand legs on 'em. They crawled everywhere. I'd see 'em as I was goin' along the road, and I'd step on 'em. They're a mean thing, but now they've chawed and gone away. People say they change into butterflies, but I don't know whether they do or not."

While we were chatting rain began to fall, and the man invited me into his hut. I could just stand up under the ridge. The walls and roof boards were pasted over with wallpaper. A bed was built in across the back, and I sat down on that. In the corner at one side of the door was a tiny stove tawny with rust, and near it was a little pile of firewood and a chair. There was a shelf full of crockery, and there were fishlines, a gun, a lantern, a mirror, and a clock that ticked loudly. Light was admitted through two small sliding windows under the eaves. The man said that he prepared for winter by banking up around the outside with dirt to the bottom of the windows. A trap door in the floor allowed him to reach down into a cellar hole where he kept his potatoes, fresh meat, bread, milk, and butter.

A rugged bit of shore

Presently a boy from a neighboring house came in and occupied the chair. The man sat on a box beside the stove. He had started a fire, for the day was chilly, and the stove drew the air in through its damper with noisy vigor. "Come, don't growl too hard," the fisherman admonished.

Then he turned to me and said: "I feel kind o' sleepy. A friend who's got a farm up the lane was callin' on me last night. 'Bout ten o'clock he began to say, 'Well, I guess I'll go home,' but it was after midnight when he left. I was sorry for his wife. She always sets up till he comes in. He spent the whole time here talkin' about himself—stuck to that one subject like a puppy to a root—and it's just the same every call he makes on me. According to his tell he could do more work than a man when he was thirteen, but I've never seen him exerting himself much."

"This rain will give me another chance to pick night crawlers," the boy remarked.

"What are those?" I asked.

"Some call 'em angleworms," he replied. "We had a good rain yesterday, but before that there was a long dry spell, and you could dig for an hour and not get enough crawlers to fish half a day. But last night I got a quart in ten minutes. They always come out after dark when the ground is wet, and you can begin to pick by eight o'clock on the road or any land that ain't covered with growing things. The garden is the best place. We go after 'em with a lantern and a can. They

have about an inch still in their hole, and you've got to grab quick or they crawl back in. So we walk careful and take care not to jar the ground and scare 'em. We can sell 'em for from twenty-five cents to fifty cents a quart to the campers. They go like hotcakes.

"The campers are always wantin' bait. After harvest we get crickets for 'em. We find the crickets under the stones. Sometimes we pick grasshoppers and sell 'em to the campers at fifty cents a hundred. They'd rather have those than any flies they can buy in the stores."

"White grubs are great bait for bass," the fisherman affirmed. "Once in a while I go in the swamps after little green frogs. By gol! it's quite a job. They're lively hoppers, and they're such a size and color that you got to keep your nose almost on the ground to see 'em. The campers are glad to get 'em at three cents apiece.

"There's some big fish in the lake. I've known pickerel to weigh twenty pounds, and I've helped ketch a sturgeon that was over two yards long. You get a sturgeon like that in spawning time and just the spawn is worth thirty-five or forty dollars. Do you see that big strong hook hangin' on the wall? It's much as three feet long, handle and all. I use that when I ketch a fish that's too large for my line. If I once hook him under the chop with that he has to do some kickin' to get away. He's got to come whether he wants to or not."

"Sturgeon meat is so oily it ain't fit to eat," the boy

said. "I like hornpouts 'bout as well as any fish. A hornpout is all meat after you take the backbone out. Some of 'em weigh two pounds. I don't care for eels. They look too much like snakes. They'd have to be parboiled and cooked pretty darn nice for me to eat, and then I shouldn't want to know what they was. Did you ever notice that you have no luck ketchin' fish when it's thunderin' around? Brook trout will be bitin' awful nice, and if it starts to thunder they'll stop right off."

"You look out of the door," the fisherman said to me, "and you can see down toward the water a fishin' shanty such as is used a good deal on the lake in winter. It's nearly as large as this house of mine. We can put it on a sled and go anywhere we want to with it. If the fish don't bite in one place we go to another. Most generally there are three holes in the bottom of a shanty, and right under each hole we chop through the ice so three fellers can fish.

"I didn't build this house, and I haven't always had it here since I owned it. Golly, no! It's been moved over a hundred times, I guess. Old Man Akey had it for his fishing camp just before I bought it, and there was one while that eight people lived in it. The old man's son, Billy, had put up a tent near his father's camp and was stayin' in it with his wife and kid. One night there was a storm with thunder and lightning and the rain poured down in sheets. The wind got to be such a gale that it was too much for the tent, and it

blowed the whole business off into the lake about twelve o'clock at night. 'Fore Billy and his family could crawl into this shanty they was wet through. The whole party slept in it for the next two weeks. Old Man Akey and his wife and baby had the bunk you're settin' on. Billy and his wife and baby were up above in another bunk, and two big strapping boys slept on the floor with their feet sticking outside through the door. The shanty was just as full as an egg, as the feller says."

While I was on Grand Isle I explored to some extent both its mild eastern shore and the bold bluffs with which it fronts the broad expanse of the lake to the west. The latter water-front was particularly delightful. Here was a succession of outreaching points against whose craggy cliffs the crested waves crash when the wind is high, and when the day is quiet the ripples dance and sing at the base of the rocks. The crags are crowned with dark-foliaged cedars, and between the points are rounded coves, pleasantly secluded, with shelving beaches of pebbles or sand. My visit to this part of the island was made on a doubtful day when one misty shower followed close on the heels of another with occasional intervals when the sunshine shimmered faintly through the clouds. I had a wide view over the gray waters of the lake, alternately darkling and brightening in the shifting light, and there were islands—dusky near ones and hazy distant ones,—and on the far shore were the beautiful Adirondacks,

now obscured by a thin veil of rain, and then revealing themselves height piled on height, growing more dreamy and evanescent in the distance till they melted into the sky.

NOTES.—Not far from where I sojourned is Burlington, Vermont's largest city, on steep rising ground fronting the lake. Here Ethan Allen, the hero of Ticonderoga, is buried in Greenmount Cemetery. The site of the house where he spent his last years is now Ethan Allen Park. Rock Dunder out in the lake was mistaken by the British for a United States vessel in 1812 and was peppered with shot.

The Battle of Lake Champlain between the British and Yankee fleets was fought one September morning in 1814 west of Grand Isle near Plattsburg, New York. Both fleets were almost battered to pieces, and, though the British were defeated, their vessels got away because the victors had not a mast left fit to carry a sail and were unable to follow.

The lake is a favorite summer resort, and is noted for its superb views and rare historic associations. The first white man to see it was the explorer whose name it bears. He visited it in a canoe in 1609.

The most delightful way to see the lake is to voyage on one of the steamers which calls at the important ports and enables the traveller to observe the various points of scenic beauty. The highways of the region include some gravel and some macadam, but you cannot depend on anything better than fair country roads.

VI

THE VILLAGE OF THE SEVEN TAVERNS

IT is a retired little hamlet among the Vermont hills, and the seven taverns, though the buildings still stand, are taverns no longer. The days when they furnished shelter and conviviality to the public date back to the time when stage-coaches were the chief means of conveyance for travellers. Then the village was on a main turnpike—a private road with toll-houses at frequent intervals—and the region was thickly settled for a farming community. Now only a handful of the people remain, and the traffic which formerly enlivened the highway passes on the rail-road through the depths of a wooded valley a mile away.

One of the old taverns was my stopping-place. It was a substantial building that had not been much changed since it was erected. The ceilings were low, and the doors were quaintly panelled and had antique hinges and latches. There was a big vacant dining-room, and a bar-room with a counter and shelves for liquors, and in the upper story was a spacious spring-floor ballroom. The structure was not in the best of repair, and the floor boards were apt to teeter beneath one's tread. In heavy rains pans had to be set here and

Washing-day

there in the kitchen to catch streams that found passage through the rear roof.

At the time of my visit in early autumn the country around was particularly charming. Touches of color showed in the foliage, the clusters on the wild grapevines had begun to turn purple, and the waysides were aglow with goldenrod. Up and down the steep hills crept the roads with many a graceful curve; and staggering board fences, patched and weather-stained and lichened, separated the highways from the scrubby pastures and irregular tracts of mowing-land. Now and then in my walks I came on a deserted home with broken windows, loosening clapboards, and a grassy dooryard long a stranger to the daily tread of human feet. Many of the old houses had disappeared altogether, and nought marked their sites but bushy cellar holes. Often when the house was gone, or a complete ruin, the barn was still in use. It perhaps had lost its doors and sagged sideways, but it was repaired enough to afford shelter for some of the thin weedy hay from the wornout fields.

My first day in the region was Sunday, and after breakfast I sat down on the piazza that ran the whole length of the tavern front. A typical Sabbath quiet pervaded the village. To be sure the roosters in the various backyards were stridently challenging each other, and I could hear the cawing of crows and the faint far-off tinkle of cow-bells on the big hills that mounded around; but human activity had well nigh

ceased. The hamlet's only two places of business, a brick store and a blacksmith's shop, were shut, and I observed no one working except a man washing a buggy in the doorway of the tavern barn. The villagers have a companionable way of shouting a greeting to such passers on the road as are known to them and when a man in overalls came plodding along the highway the buggy-washer called out to him, "Hello, Tom, did my cow trouble you with her noise last night?"

Tom turned aside from the roadway, took his pipe from his mouth and remarked: "I never wake up till the alarm goes off in the morning, no matter what noises there are around. Say, I gorry, you could hitch that cow to my bed five minutes after I've crawled in, and she could beller as much as she pleased, and 'twould never wake me. I tell you, Holt, you take a good honest man that works hard all day and eats three square meals, he can sleep like a hog all night."

"You don't mean 'sleep like a hog,'" Holt said. "You mean 'sleep like a man.'"

"Well, I don't know," Tom responded, "I expect I'm half hog; feel them brustles."

He took off his hat and lowered his close-cropped head for inspection; and Holt after running his fingers over the other's hair agreed as to its stiffness.

Pretty soon Tom moved on, and I made some inquiry of Holt about a big, square, vacant house across the road. "I'll go in and ask Ma," was his response.

He left his work and I followed him into the house.

"Ma" was Mrs. Stowell, my landlady. She was not Holt's mother, but an elderly relation, and he always referred to her any questions concerning the past. "That house has been empty for several years now," she said. "The last person who lived in it was an old lady who stayed there all alone. I used to enjoy calling on her, she kept everything so neat, and no matter how early you'd go over in the morning her hair was fixed in waves as nice as could be. It was very pleasant to look across and see that front room lit up in the evening. She was always busy, and you'd think from the way she worked that she had a large family. Why, she'd get up at daylight Monday, and yet have so much to do around the house that she wouldn't get her washing out till four in the afternoon."

My landlady had in her hand a stick with a leather flap on the end, and as she talked she moved about spying out the flies and smiting them with the flap. "I have screens everywhere," she said, "but the flies manage to get in some way or other."

"What did people do before they had screens?" I asked.

"I often think of that," she replied. "There was no such thing when I was young; but we had thick, green paper curtains, and we'd roll them down to darken the house, and then we'd break some small limbs off the maple trees in the yard and brush the flies out."

On a bare hill a short distance up the road stood a great white barn of a church, but service was only held

once a month and attracted few attendants. It is a spireless structure built in 1787 and is even now practically what it was in the beginning. Inside you find the old square pews with seats on three sides, and the high pulpit overhung by a sounding-board and having the deacon's seat against the front below like a little cage.

The older people can remember when every Sunday the meeting-house was full, and how the worshippers "would sing for all they was worth." A local resident named Devens whom I found on Sunday afternoon loitering in the cemetery which adjoined the churchyard with a companion he called Todd, explained the present situation by saying, "I'd rather take my rod and box of worms and go sit down side of the river than hear the best minister that ever was. About the only persons that go to hear the preachers nowadays are a few of the women and children with nothing else to do; and nine-tenths of the women are there just to show their new clothes. Let a woman get a new hat or coat, and she's at church the next Sunday, sure.

"A good many men used to go hunting on Sunday; but there's a law which says you mustn't, and lately they've begun to enforce it. So you're liable to be gobbled if you carry your gun that day. It's a law made for rich people. They've got leisure to hunt when they please, but Sunday is the only chance for poor men. Perhaps, though, those that work all the week ought to rest on Sunday, and now they've got to. When

A colonial pulpit

I was a boy we never thought of such a thing as Sunday hunting or fishing. No, sir! no, sir! We all went to meeting and Sunday-school and read the Bible—and it was a long day. The kids now spend it quite different. If they read anything it's these Wild West novels, and on Monday they go and shoot somebody.

"The meeting-house was built by the town, and four gallons of rum were voted to be served at the raising. That was a time when every one drank, and you couldn't have any sociability without rum. But they had distilled liquor then, and if a man got drunk on it his head wa'n't bigger'n a bushel basket next morning. It's all made of drugs now."

"Considerable cider brandy was distilled at one time right here in our village," Todd said. "This used to be a lively place then with all its taverns and other business; but when the railroad was built about 1850 that give us a setback."

"Yes," Devens commented, "the railroad did away with the four-horse coaches that passed through here. I can remember 'em. They was loaded right down with passengers and there was trunks piled way up behind—all they could get on. In those days, too, every farmer would go down to Boston once or twice a year with a load of produce drawn by a yoke of oxen or perhaps two yoke. They'd have some dead pork and a little of one thing and another to make up the load and usually went late in the fall after it was cold enough to freeze up the meat. A whole string of fellows would travel to-

gether, and when they stopped at the taverns they'd treat."

"You recollect Old Bailey, don't you?" Todd said "He drew for the stores and was going back and forth all the time. It took him a fortnight to make a trip. He had a six-horse team and put on a ton to a horse in his canvas-topped wagon."

"Why, good Lord!" Devens exclaimed, "Uncle Luke White drove hogs to Boston for years. But it didn't take much gumption to drive hogs then; for they grazed in the pastures and was used to bein' outdoors. Once in a while a man would drive turkeys to Boston. He had to stop when it was dark whether he wanted to or not because the turkeys would go up in the trees to roost."

"Speakin' of the times when the railroad was built reminds me of the Lawrence boys," Todd said. "They was livin' up at Hardscrabble, and the railroad went across their property. The damages they got was too small to suit 'em, and the old woman went and greased the rails. That bothered the trains some, but it didn't stop their running and then the boys started to raise hog by piling ties on the track. So the railroad sent officers to arrest 'em. The boys got warning somehow and come down here, forty miles. That was a long way in those days; but they were caught and fined just the same."

Not far from where we sat were several white stones decorated with a hand pointing upward. I asked some

question about them and was told that they were erected by a man named Leverett Lowell in memory of his wives. One after another he lost four and bought a stone for each of exactly the same pattern. "His own stone stands at the end of the row," Todd remarked, "and there's a motto on it—'at rest'—kind o' appropriate, ain't it?"

"You know he married a fifth time," Devens said, —"took old Mother Houghton. She was a holy terror. Her former husband was a big burly saloon keeper, but in spite of his size, when he got drunk she'd throw him into a closet and keep him there until he was sober. She and Lowell didn't agree very well and they got a divorce; and then he wanted to marry again—the old crank—though he was well along in years and so fat and helpless that when he drove anywhere they had to run with a chair for him to step on getting in and out of the wagon. Yes, and the person he picked out was a little young girl only sixteen or seventeen years old. But his own children wouldn't let him make that match."

"There's a tomb up to Cuttingville you ought to see," Wilson said to me. "It cost seventy-five thousand dollars and is the burial place of a family of four—a man and wife and their two children. The wife and children each has a life size bust in the tomb, and there are mirrors so set that the busts are repeated and look as if they extended in long rows way off into the distance till they get so small you can't see 'em. The man him-

self is carved in a full figure, which is dovetailed into a step outside. He's got his hat in his hand and seems to be just going in; and the work is done so natural you can even see the stitches in his buttonholes."

"But let me tell you," Devens said, "do you 'spose that man's gone to heaven? He had a poor sister that was on the town there; and he wouldn't help her because he claimed she'd had just as good a chance to make money as he had."

"He was a mean cuss," Todd commented. "I'd like to know what his heart was like."

"Lots of people in this world ain't got no heart," the other declared—"nothing but a gizzard and a mighty small one at that."

"There's a number of interesting stones in this old cemetery of ours that I'd like to show you," Todd said, turning to me.

He rose and led the way down the hill a little where he called my attention to the following inscription:

In MEMORY of Mifs.
EUNICE PAIN who Died
June 10th 1805 in the 16th
year of her age
Behold & read a mournfull fate
Two lovers were fincere
And one is left without a mate,
The other flumbers here.

I asked for the details of this pathetic romance, but my guide said, neither he nor any of the villagers knew more than was on the stone.

Another unusual inscription was—

In Memory of Mr. Josiah White
who Died Sep^{t} 1^{ft} 1806 in the 96th
year of his age
The descendants of Josiah White at his death
Children 15, Grand Children 160, Grate grand
Children 211. Children Deceas'd 2, Grand Children
Deceas'd 26, grate grand children Deceas'd 35

"Some of the stones have the cost marked at the bottom," my companion said. "Here's one dated 1808, and this line of print way down level with the ground reads: 'Price 29 Dollars & 96 Cents.' Notice, too, the coffin chiseled up above with the initials of the man who is buried here cut on the lid.

"Just beyond is the grave of an ancestor of mine who was the first male child born in the settlement. That distinction entitled him to a grant of land, and he was given a piece of swamp down by the river, full of logs and trash left by the floods. 'Twa'n't good for anything. He couldn't sell it, and when he came of age he swapped it for a gun.

"The stone with the most curious inscription that ever was in the burying-ground has been stolen. I

remember exactly how it looked. It was an old slate stone of medium size, and I could name a dozen other persons who knew it as well as I did. The verse was—

'Here lays our darling baby boy,
He neither screams nor hollers;
He lived with us just twenty days
And cost us forty dollars.'

"You had to push down the grass to read the last lines. One time they had a bee here to straighten up the stones. I was away, but when I got back they told me that stone I been speakin' of didn't seem to be there. I offered to bet I could go right to the spot, for I had been to read that verse a hundred times—I thought it was funny. The stone was gone, though, sure enough, and I couldn't find it, though I looked with all the eyes I've got."

Later in the afternoon I called at the home of an old resident of the region named Slade. He was in the kitchen eating his dinner at a coverless table that was pushed back against the wall. His wife was an invalid and lay on a disheveled bed in an alcove beyond the stove. Mr. Slade had his coat off, and his shirt sleeves were rolled up to the elbow. "My wife was one of them regular go-ahead women before she was took sick," he said, chewing away meditatively. "That was seventeen years ago, and I've had to get my own grub ever since."

The aspect of the room was quite suggestive of a

man's housekeeping. The stove was brown with rust, the walls and ceiling were dingy, and there was an amazing amount of litter. He evidently put things down and piled them up wherever it came handy. When he finished eating, he went and sat down in a rocking-chair; but his wife routed him out of it. "Get up, Edward," she ordered, "and let the man have that chair. I want him to sit there where I can see him, and if he looks like a good honest man I'll talk to him."

I changed places with Mr. Slade, and she said, "I suppose when you go away you'll be tellin' a long rigmarole about what sort of people you met here; and, my dear boy, I want to advise you to take all the lazy trollops and the smart ones and mix 'em together so as to get kind of an average that'll be fair to us."

Now and then Mrs. Slade groaned or sighed, or asked her husband to bring her a drink of water, or to help her to change her position. Once she suddenly addressed him with the query, "Can I believe a word I hear?"

"What are you referating to?" he inquired.

"I understand," she said, "that since Lew Miller has died the people where he was staying have brought in a bill to comb all that was left of his property; and they've been havin' five dollars a week right along for takin' care of him, and they've got him to thank for all the lace curtains and fine carpets that are in the house."

After this topic had been discussed Mr. Slade re-

marked, "They say there's a bear over at Chester playing 'possum around. Some one found several calf pelts all cleaned out and rolled up just the way bears leave 'em, and he saw the bear, too. 'Twa'n't an hour before fifty men was on the spot, but they didn't have a chance to do any shootin'. Bears will get off terribly. It's a wonder the way they make themselves scarce. They'll slip out of sight, and even if you foller their tracks for days they'll get off."

"Ed," Mrs. Slade said, "perhaps it was a bear you saw when you was goin' down to the station the other night with your lantern." She turned to me and added, "Yes, he saw suthin' and it frightened him so he hollered like a loon."

"I was squawkin' at the critter—I wa'n't frightened," Mr. Slade asserted.

"I guess you was," she said. "I wouldn't be a mite surprised if you was scared right into your boots."

"It was that high," Mr. Slade explained, holding his hand about two feet from the floor, "and light colored. I stopped and it stood a rod or such a matter away looking at me, and then, by gorry, I yapped at it and it ran off as if the devil was after it."

"Edward," Mrs. Slade said.

"What's up now?" he asked.

"If you don't open the door and let in some air I shall faint away," was the reply.

He opened the door. "Say Ed," the invalid observed as he returned to his seat.

Capturing bees

"What shall I say?" was his response.

"You remember Herbert Scott's wife?" she resumed. "I ain't so bad to take care of as she was, am I?"

"Nowhere near," Mr. Slade declared, reassuringly, and she said, "They never any of Herb's family had an ache or a pain but that old Mother Slade must go to them, night or day; and yet I don't s'pose they care a cob about my sickness. Herb's wife was an awful nervous thing, and in that long sick spell of hers, if you give her a drink of water and let fall two drops of it on her she'd have a chill and send for the doctor. When she was well she'd spend a good share of her time sitting in front of a looking-glass making up faces to see how bad she could look."

"Oh, no," Mr. Slade objected, "Mamy wa'n't seein' how bad she could look. She was just makin' fancy faces."

"She wanted to appear like city folks," Mrs. Slade continued. "But let me tell you—city people don't make such a fuss about their expression, and eating with a fork and all the other little polite tricks. I've been in the city as much as once and a half, and I know."

"Here comes Hattie and Jim," Mr. Slade said, glancing out of the window. "They are our daughter and her husband," he explained to me.

With them were several of their children, the oldest a red-headed fourteen year old boy, who at once began a friendly squabble with his grandfather. "Jimmy has

been away for three weeks," his mother said, "and since he's got back, I'll be plagued if he can come into this house without pickin' a row with the old man."

"My daughter here is slim and don't look very strong," Mrs. Slade said; "but she's tough, and she does her own work and goes out five days in the week to help at the neighbors' houses."

"It don't take her all day to do a little job like it does some people," the boy remarked.

"Oh, fiddlesticks!" was Hattie's comment.

"We been speakin' of Herb's wife," Mr. Slade said, "What was't he used to call her? Do you remember, old woman?"

"Yes," Mrs. Slade responded, "he called her a chromo—a hand-painted one."

"If a man was to call me that I'd break his face," Hattie declared.

"If you was able, you might—if you wasn't you wouldn't," Jim said. "But you'd be madder'n an old wet hen. I know that."

Two of the little girls were having a row in a corner which the mother now interrupted by saying, "Susy, come here."

"The little girl, however, was loth to obey, and her mother went on to remark, "You're too big to be licked when people are around; but if I have to go after you, you'll hear from it."

Jimmy had begun eating a crab-apple he found on the table. "Gramp," he said to Mr. Slade, "this

apple's sourer'n swill. Every time I set my teeth into it the sourness draws my left eye right together."

"Would you rather have that kind on the window-sill?" Gramp asked.

"You bet," Jimmy replied, reaching for a couple. "Them are from the pasture. I call 'em brickbat sweets."

"This boy," Gramp said, patting Jimmy's red head affectionately, "has never had an absent or tardy mark from the time he first started going to school."

"I hope we don't have the same teacher again that we had last year," Jimmy said. "She was the ugliest old thing that ever kept school in the world."

"She would everlastingly whale 'em," the boy's father declared; "and she'd make the ones she whipped go out and cut the sticks to do it with. One kid, after he'd cut the stick, broke it up and skinned for home."

"We used to have forty scholars or more in this school," Mr. Slade observed. "Now they transport children from two other deestricts here and have in all less than twenty. When there ain't as many as seven school children in a deestrict it's the custom to ship 'em off to some other so as to get enough to make a quorum."

"I was over at North Walpole yesterday," Jim said, "and passed the old Willis House. That's been haunted now more'n thirty years, ain't it?"

"Yes," Mr. Slade replied. "When the first owner died it was rented, and tenant after tenant tried livin' in it and left. They said a ghost walked in one of the

rooms at night and they'd hear all kinds of noises. The present tenant, though, is a phlegmatic sort of a feller who's been in the house a good while, but he's got the haunted part boarded up."

"That'd'a' been a good house for the Spiritualists to have meetin's in," Jim commented.

"They used to have seances and circles where I lived before I moved here," Mr. Slade said. "My mother got bent that way, and Uncle Bill was red hot. Not long after Father's death there was a medium at our house and he gave each of us a message. He claimed Father was talking through him. I came in at the tail end, and Ma thought my message sounded like Father exactly. But I said, 'No it don't in any way, shape or form. It's a humbug from beginning to end.'

"From what I saw I concluded that the mediums all played for the dollars and that their hearers was duped. Two of their believers were our nearest neighbors—a man and wife who agreed that whichever died first would come back once in a while and tickle the other's hand. Well, the wife died, and the man said he often felt his hand tickled and knew the spirit of his wife was with him.

"Then there was a girl who would sit down to the organ, and some of the famous dead musicians would take possession of her and play through her fingers. But they played tunes that run her hands right out beyond the keys which was on the organ, and her folks had to get her a piano. She worked that pretty clever."

Just then one of the little girls ran in shouting that Dan and Kit were in the orchard. "They're horses belonging to a neighbor," Mr. Slade said, as he rose to go out. "Nearly every day they're turned loose to bait along the roadside, but they spend most of their time in the fields and eat up our apples and everybody else's."

The next morning when I looked out of my window a drizzling rain was falling, and a man who was plodding past with a coat thrown over his shoulders and the empty sleeves flapping on either side, only added to the melancholy of the scene. All that day the rain continued to fall straight down through the quiet air with a steady rustle among the leaves of the trees and an equally steady drip from the eaves of the roof. When I asked any one about the prospects of the weather changing for the better, they would look up toward a certain glen in the hills known as Bill's Notch, which got its name from Bill Pulsifer, an early settler in whose pasture the notch was included. If the fog still hung in Bill's Notch the local residents were assured the storm would continue.

At the dinner table Holt remarked that he'd been thinking of "Grampa" Stowell, the man who built the tavern. "I come into the room one time where he was sitting reading a letter," Holt went on, "and asked him for money to buy a guitar. He was getting old and cranky, and I can remember just how he whirled around in his chair and said, 'Don't be a-flutin' or a-fiddlin', but 'tend to your books!'

"Grampa was a pretty clever old gentleman. Once in the midst of a thunderstorm when he was on his way to Millville he met a man from there who was considered the biggest rascal anywhere about. Grampa was on horseback—they didn't go in wagons much then—and the man was on foot and had a woman with him. They told Grampa, who was a Justice of the Peace, that they was goin' to his house to get him to marry 'em. 'Just as well here as anywhere,' he says, and he reined his horse up under a tree to get a little shelter from the storm, and raising his hand said—

> 'Beneath this spreading chestnut tree,
> I declare you man and wife to be;
> And none but Him who rules the thunder
> Shall part this rogue and woman asunder.'"

"It is a lonely road to Millville," the landlady said. "I've been worried a good many times when my husband had to come over it alone at night. I remember once in particular when I knew he'd got a large sum of money and was intending to walk from there, I kept going to the door to listen. You recollect, Holt, he had a habit of clearing his throat every little while; and when I'd go to the back porch to call him to breakfast I'd hark till I heard his 'ham!' so's to get some idea of where he was. Well, that was the first I heard of him the night I was speakin' of, and then I knew he was almost home."

"You've had your share of worry," Holt said, "and

I often think of how you took care of John G. so many years."

"Who was he?" I asked.

"John G. Stowell," Holt replied. "There's piles of Stowells in this region, and we have to use something besides the last name to distinguish one from another. John G. went to Dartmouth College, and he was the brightest scholar in his class."

"He was too smart for his brain," the landlady interrupted—"that's just what the matter was."

"He studied too hard," Holt continued. "Well, he was ready to graduate, and there was a big assembly gathered in the hall to hear the first exercises. Seven other students took part; but John G. was the orator of the occasion. At last it come his turn, and what did he do but turn and jump right through a window, and he ran all the way home—probably thirty miles. He climbed in at a window and went to his brother Tim's room. Tim woke up, and there was John G. standin' by his bed very wild lookin' and excited. 'They're after me, Tim,' he says, 'and they're goin' to shoot.'

"He was never right after that and had to have a guardian appointed. He's often told us that it was a mistake, his goin' to college, and he'd say, 'If father had given me a darned good lickin' and set me to work I might have amounted to something.'"

"John G. was queer in a good many ways," the landlady said, "but shooting was the greatest thing with him, and he wore a big piece of sole leather on his

breast to protect him from bullets. He kept it in place by punching holes along the edge and sewing it to his shirt. For fear his enemies might come to shoot him while he was asleep he always spent the night on the kitchen floor with the windows open and the door unlocked so he could run and escape. A bundle he carried about with him served as a pillow. The bundle was nothing but his extra clothing done up in a big handkerchief; and yet he was afraid somebody would be meddling with it and took great pains to tie it up hard and fast, knot after knot, with a cord as big round as my little finger. He had to pick and pick when he wanted to untie it.

"He was afraid if he wore nice things he'd be killed for what he had on. So when he bought a new pair of boots he'd keep 'em rolled up tight to get 'em all wrinkled before he'd put 'em on; and even then he'd cut a slit or two in them to make sure nobody would suspicion they were new. He always wore his worst clothes on the outside and looked like a ragbag. But sometimes when he was here he'd take off the shabby outside things and shave and smooth down the other clothes he wore, and then he'd say to me, 'Ain't I a good-formed man?'

"'Why don't you dress that way all the time?' I'd ask.

"'Nobody wouldn't kill me for them old duds,' he'd say; 'but they would for these.'

"So he'd put on the rags again, and he'd wear all

those extra things buttoned right up in the hottest day that ever was.

"Often he had a notion he was being squeezed with lard squeezers. 'They're squeezing of me to death,' he'd say. 'I can't see 'em, but they're doing it all the same. They just come right up behind me and put the squeezers on.' Sometimes in the morning he'd tell us they'd been squeezing him all night, and then he'd girt himself with a cord to measure and see how much he'd shrunk.

"He wandered around a good deal, and the first year he was here he was gone one time for ten weeks. It was winter, and I never expected to see him again. I thought he was in a snowbank somewhere; but he'd been way up among the mountain farmers. Everybody knew John G. and he could always get kept; but no matter where he went he'd sleep on the kitchen floor with his clothes on, exactly as he did here, because he'd got to be ready to run. We never had any idea how long or short his stays would be with us. He'd get up early some morning and go out in the road and throw up his cane, and the direction it pointed when it fell was the direction he'd take. I think, though, after he started, he knew pretty well where he was going to head up at night. If I asked him about his intentions he'd reply, 'I'm goin' to find fresh air;' and off he'd go, cane in hand, and with his bundle on a stick over his shoulder.

"Next to shooting he was in dread of being poisoned.

He wouldn't eat with others and he wanted to watch you prepare his food to make sure you didn't put poison in it. One day he come in after having been gone a week or so, and he brought his hat full of crackers from the store and set it down on the wood in the woodbox. I happened to go and get a stick to put in the stove, and he jumped up and said, 'You've been pizening them crackers—I know you have!'

"So he carried 'em out and throwed every one of 'em on the ground, and went to the store for a new mess.

"He was very good about doing small jobs for me; but he didn't always do 'em at the time I asked him. 'You're wantin' somethin' done all the while,' he'd say, 'and I ain't goin' to sweep up your backyard,' or whatever it was I'd spoken of.

"'All right,' I'd reply, 'it won't matter a bit.'

"But by and by he'd come around and say, 'Well, I s'pose you want that done,' and he would go ahead and do it.

"He was quite a reader, and could converse on anything. One stormy winter evening, when my children were small, he says, 'Mrs. Stowell, can't I lie down in the sitting-room where the rest of you are?'

"I said of course he could, and he lay there on the floor while the children were studying their lessons. Sometimes they'd ask him the meaning of a word, and after he'd told 'em he'd say, 'Now I want you to parse that word,' and if they couldn't he would."

"When the dances we used to have here broke up,"

Holt said, "those that attended liked to get John G. to make a speech. They'd chip in a dollar or two and give him a few glasses of liquor to oil him up and he'd get off some of the greatest declamations ever heard. He had a beautiful voice to speak or to sing either."

"One day when he'd been with me about eight years," the landlady resumed, "as soon as he sat down to eat breakfast he began to talk pizen, and I see he was terribly wound up that morning. He'd only taken a few mouthfuls when he give a kind of a groan, and his right hand dropped by his side. He'd had a shock, and when I spoke to him he really didn't act as if he knew much. We took him and laid him down on the floor with his bundle under his head so he'd feel natural; but he never come to and he died that afternoon.

"I'd always said that if I outlived him I'd have people see him well-dressed for once, and I had his best clothes put on, and he did look splendid in his coffin."

"I tell you," Holt said, "if the story of this old tavern could be written with all the good and the bad things that have happened here, and all the funny and the sad things, it would make one of the most interesting books ever published."

That was stretching the probabilities, and yet the random revelations unfolded to me in my short stay were suggestive of a strangely tangled web of both weal and woe; and there was something of the same appeal to the sympathies in the glimpses that came to me of the past in other village homes. Much of the tragic was

traceable to drunkenness, and I wondered if the fact that the hamlet had been so numerously supplied with taverns did not have something to do with the melancholy record. The present, too, was sullied by the same malign influence; and this I regretted the more because I found the people so kindly and courteous and ready to do anything they could to oblige me.

Notes.—The roads in southern Vermont are as a rule dirt or gravel and fairly good. But off the main thoroughfares you not infrequently find those that are hilly, winding, narrow, and poor, though there is likely to be sufficient compensation in the beautiful and unspoiled wild scenery.

One place in this section of the state that all visitors should see is Bennington in the vicinity of which was fought one of the notable battles of the Revolution. It was the home of Ethan Allen of Ticonderoga fame. Among its attractions are a battle monument over three hundred feet high and the Hessian Burial Ground.

At the door of a country store

VII

AUGUST IN THE BERKSHIRE HILLS

BERKSHIRE, the westernmost of the counties of Massachusetts, sweeps straight across the state from Connecticut to Vermont. It is a district of mountains and tumbled lesser heights, and though one or two of its valleys are broad enough to give a sense of repose, even there the blue waves of the encircling hills are constantly in sight. From the uplands streams come coursing down the wooded glens, with here and there a foaming waterfall, and they go on through the valleys, still swiftly as a rule, but sometimes broadening into a pond or lake, and occasionally set to work to turn the wheels of a mill.

Portions of the county, like Lenox and Stockbridge are famous as the summer playground of millionaries from the great cities, and there you find palatial mansions in the midst of great estates that have all the beauty in architecture, gardens, and grounds which wealth can confer. In other parts of the county farms predominate, sometimes bearing evidence of thrift and prosperity, sometimes betokening shiftless poverty or a dubious struggle against hard conditions. It has been said that in the back country hill towns the ordinary farmer is worth scarcely five hundred dollars and that

important items in his property are a fifteen dollar horse and a cheap watch chiefly valuable for swapping purposes.

When I started out to make an automobile trip in Berkshire I entered the county from the east, and after a long climb up an ever-winding dirt road that followed a stream through the woodland I emerged from the forest. The long road stretched upward as if it led to the very sky, and by and by I came to a deserted house and stopped to eat lunch under a tree in the yard. The house had been snug and substantial in its prime, but now the shingles were slipping off the roof, the walls were out of plumb, and the underpinning was giving way. Faint traces of red paint lingered on the weather-worn clapboards. Near one corner some neglected rosebushes had become a thicket. The interior was a wreck of falling ceilings, warped floors, and rubbish. Even the great stone fireplaces were cracking and going to pieces. Back of the house the barn had slumped down, and there it lay a heap of decaying débris. The fields around that once bore bountiful crops now produced only thin yields of wild grass, and the stone walls that in earlier days were so sturdy had become ruinous, and brush flourished along their borders.

I was in the town of Peru, and somewhat farther on, at a crossroads, was a church, a store, a schoolhouse, and the town hall, all in a row, all wooden, and all painted white. No more than five or six dwellings were in the immediate vicinity. The spot is twenty-one

hundred feet above the sea, and is the highest inhabited land in Massachusetts. So exactly is the church perched on the summit of the watershed that the rain falling on the west roof goes into the Housatonic and what falls on the east roof goes into the Connecticut. Each of the four roads plunges boldly down into a vale only to mount ridges beyond and it continues its undulating course mile after mile.

A century ago the town had a thousand inhabitants, but they have steadily decreased ever since until now there are scarcely two hundred. The bleakness of the situation, especially in winter, the stony soil, the difficult roads, and the feeling that life in such surroundings is dull and that the returns for labor must be small at best has made the people drift away to regions they fancy are more favored.

I visited a neglected cemetery off on a hillside that overlooked the group of buildings at the corners. It was bounded by stone walls, a few unthrifty trees grew in it, and the straggling gravestones were nearly hidden in weeds and brush. In places the ground was gay with patches of scarlet bunch-berries. Blueberry bushes flourished too and were loaded with delicious fruit. I mentioned my enjoyment of the blueberries to the storekeeper when I returned to the village. "So you've been robbing the graves," was his comment.

The store was architecturally plainer and less pretentious than many barns, and its austerity was unrelieved by a single near tree. There it stood beside the

road exposed to the summer sun and the onslaughts of the winter storms, yet whatever its shortcomings in structure and environment it was the business and social center of all the mountain region around. Out in front of it the ground was much cluttered with an accumulation of timber, wagons, sleds, farm machines, rolls of wire, boxes, barrels, and other miscellany. Inside it was crowded to the doors with goods of marvellous variety. The merchandise had encroached on the aisles till one could hardly move about, and it was stacked against the post office boxes so that they were almost hidden from sight.

I looked on while the proprietor made a sale of footwear to a young fellow whose horses, hitched to a wagon loaded with grain, were waiting for him out in front. "There's a ripping good shoe, Henry," the merchant said convincingly. He turned it this way and that, felt of its leather with evident admiration, and handed it to his customer who was soon persuaded to buy.

A short time before burglars had broken in the back entrance and blown off the door of the safe with nitro glycerine. The storekeeper only became aware of what had happened when he opened the store the next morning. He found that the explosion had stopped the clock on the wall near the safe with the pointers at five minutes past three, and that the burglars had carried off some loose change and possibly two dollars worth of stamps.

One of the men loitering on the platform at the entrance to the store was a woodland worker whose employer owned a portable sawmill. He had me go with him out into the road and pointed to the mill nearly concealed among the trees off on a neighboring slope. "We broke down yesterday," he said. "That's why I'm doin' nothin' today. We move around from woodlot to woodlot. This feller that I'm workin' for has been at it with his mill for the last thirty-five years. He hires ten or twelve men and keeps a couple of teams. We have a shack to live in that is made in sections so it can be taken down and put up in a new place. We do our own cooking. Some of the spruce trees we're cuttin' now are two foot through on the stump. We're at it all the year, winter and summer. One season is just as good as another except that in hot weather the wood is gummy and makes the saws stick."

The church on the hilltop was of a finicky suburban type, but on the same spot there formerly stood a simple, dignified old white meeting-house. One Saturday evening in February the janitor went in and started the fires so that the edifice would get warm for the services of the next day. Shortly afterward the building was in flames, and on that high ridge the blazing beacon could be seen for many miles around. The people of the vicinity turned out, and quite a crowd gathered, but it was impossible to fight the fire or to save anything. A "terrible" wind blew, and for a time the store was in danger from the flying brands. Men

climbed up on the roof and threw pails of water over the shingles, and the night was so bitterly cold that the water froze as fast as it fell.

Late in the afternoon I descended the hill westerly a few miles and found lodging at an old farm which had been transformed into a summer boarder resort. A long two-story annex encircled by a broad piazza adjoined the house. It was a sort of barracks rudely partitioned off into sleeping apartments. No lath, plaster, or paint were used, and the walls and floor were one board thick. After I had retired I found that the noises from the rooms on either side all came through, and what with the talking and singing and walking about inside of the building and on the piazzas, the dancing and the thrumming of the piano, sleep was out of the question. Finally some man dropped his shoes on the floor above. I started up with the impression that there had been an earthquake. Surely, if any one had come to this resort to get into the quiet country and cure a nervous breakdown such a racket would have finished him. But so far as I am aware the people were satisfied and enjoying themselves, though I could not help feeling that their loafing was rather uneasy and objectless.

The farm people and their helpers, on the other hand, led a life that was genuinely strenuous. They worked early and late, and various makeshifts served for their sleeping apartments. Some had bunks in the barn, some occupied tents in a field across the road, and the

A nook among the hills

old farmer slept in a room roughly fixed up in a shed. When he came out in the morning smoking his pipe and sat down on the piazza I got to windward of him and asked what crops were raised in the region.

He puffed meditatively once or twice and then said: "Well, we raise potatoes and corn and buckwheat and considerable hay and oats. Our season ain't really long enough for corn. This year we had a backward spring, cold and wet, and now the corn is just silking out. There'll be more stalks than ears. We've already had frost in low places, and only now and then an ear will get ripe, but we'll husk it all just the same and feed the soft corn to the pigs.

"When I was a young man I bought a hundred acre farm up in Peru with a good house and three barns on it for eight hundred dollars. The house alone couldn't have been built for that money. Pretty well-to-do farmers lived there in them days. But one after another they moved away or got old and died. They all had good dairies and herds of young cattle, and they made butter and cheese. Lots of sheep were kept, and I remember one man had a thousand. Now there are not any the dogs raise havoc so. It's fine country for sheep, and I think they may have 'em again up there, but the pastures are run out, and new fences would have to be made. A cattle fence won't keep 'em in. You've got to have more wires, and barbed wire won't do because it pulls out too much wool. We used to have brush fence and fence made of spruce poles, and

there were fences of rails split out of swamp ash. But the old wooden fences have about all rotted down.

"I brought up most of my fifteen children in Peru, and some of 'em died there, but I wouldn't have 'em buried in the Peru cemetery. That's a bad spot. It's so wet that I've seen graves, after they were dug, half full of water. The people would put in spruce brush so the coffin, when it was lowered, wouldn't go right into the water. That was too shocking for me, and I buried my children down here.

"Finally I moved onto this place, and I kept thirty cows, but as time went on it got so I couldn't get help to milk so many or raise enough to feed 'em. The only men that came along askin' for work were tramps and drunkards. They were all in rags, and the first thing I'd have to do was to furnish 'em with shoes and shirts. They'd stay a couple of weeks until about five dollars was due 'em, and then they'd want the money, and off they'd go. It was enough to try the patience of Job, and I give up. That's why you'll find the barns and other buildings here, which ought to be full of cows and stock, nearly empty.

"When I bought the place I could hire help for reasonable wages, but now a man wants thirty dollars a month and board, and he can't begin to earn what he asks. That's been my experience. Since we've gone into the summer boarder business we have to hire a good many girls, but none of 'em wants to wash dishes. They're willing to wait on table, but the rest of the day

they don't want to do nawthin'. It ain't because they're not able to do the work. They're good eaters, and they sleep long enough, and they're stout, but if you hire one of 'em she expects there'll be a man around to wait on her. He must get the wood and water and make the fires and fetch the potatoes and do all the rough work, you know, while she looks on."

By the time the chill of the early morning had been tempered by the bright sunshine I was again on my way. The weather was ideal, and whenever I was out in the open country either on the hills or in the cultivated valleys I had superb views of the mountains, with a splendid blue sky above on which the stately cloudships sailed. Most of the big upheaving mountain ranges had tilted fields and pastures on their lower slopes, and then the green woods swept up over their summits, but occasionally a great rounded height was patchworked with cultivated lands to its very top, and on certain other heights the forest crept down to the valley depths and even arched and shadowed the lowland roadways.

The Berkshire road is a continual delight. Perhaps it was most appealing to me when from the verge of a hill I overlooked a long stretch of it with bordering homes, fields, and fences, orchards, and shade trees—a human thoroughfare travelled for long years past by rich and poor, by workers and by pleasure-seekers, by school children and by churchgoers, by lovers and by mourners. Often it flowed gently on for miles up and

down the little hills between the mountain ranges, but it was ever winding, and changes and surprises in the scene were constant. In the wilder sections there were yellow masses of goldenrod and wild sunflowers beside the way or along the field divisions and the streams, and sometimes there were jungles of joe-pye weed capped with mauve-tinted bloom, and occasionally high-bush blackberry vines drooped low with a weight of fruit close to the wheeltracks.

One of the pleasant little valley towns that I visited was Lanesboro, to which I was attracted largely by the fact that it was the birthplace of "Josh Billings." His real name was Henry W. Shaw, and the old Shaw house where he passed his early years still looks down from its position on a high plateau of a western hill. The humorist is buried in the village cemetery, where, in accord with his wishes, an enormous rough block of marble from a local quarry marks his grave.

A townsman recalled that "Squire Shaw," the father of Josh Billings, was the richest, most prominent man in the region. He had marked ability, knew more theology than the minister, and more law than nine-tenths of the lawyers. The town always elected him to the legislature when he wanted to go. In Boston, if his support was gained for a measure, that measure was considered as good as passed. He was a forcible speaker, and he could shed tears and work on the feelings of his audience, and yet be as cool as a cucumber inside. The squire often went to the store where the post office was

and sat for an hour or more to talk politics, and the villagers liked to listen to him. He had his failings, but his wife was "a devoted Christian woman," the daughter of one of the nabobs of the town who owned five or six farms.

Josh had an older brother, Bob, who inherited twenty thousand dollars when he came of age, and that spoiled him. He began to carouse, chose wild young men for his companions, kept fast horses, and drove from town to town and tavern to tavern. One of his pranks was the stealing of the bell-tongue from the Lanesboro meeting-house steeple. On another occasion, when there was a revival meeting at the church he hitched up his best horse and drove round and round the building all of a winter afternoon until the meeting came to an end. He married the sister of one of his cronies, and his father gave him a farm, but Bob wouldn't settle down, and finally he drifted West, where he died.

"Hen Shaw," as the humorist was commonly known in his youth, was a reticent boy, and didn't seem to care about having companions. Presently he was sent off to Hamilton College. Then it was whispered around that he had run away and joined a circus. But no one dared ask the old squire whether the rumor was true or not. In two or three years Josh returned home. Once a menagerie came to town, and he went in and showed up the animals. He drew a crowd by his quaintly humorous descriptions and comments.

As a man he was over six feet tall and large-framed, but round-shouldered, spare, and bony. After he began to write he let his hair grow long and cultivated oddity in his appearance. He married a local farmer's daughter, whose folks objected to the match, because they thought he was shiftless, while his own folks were no less displeased because her family was less aristocratic than theirs. So the courtship was mostly conducted on the village street.

Josh had not been brought up to systematic habits, and he was undoubtedly physically lazy and disinclined to exert himself. This, however, did not prevent his winning fame as an author and making a fortune by his writing and his lecture tours. He came to Lanesboro every summer and boarded at the hotel, where he enjoyed sitting around and talking to congenial friends and acquaintances, or he might visit the store and loiter there chatting and cracking jokes. Now and then he would go fishing.

In his day and generation he added not a little to the world's gayety. He was a keen judge of character, and his whimsical wisdom and the genuine originality of his vein of humor and his fantastic spelling will long be remembered.

One of the Berkshire Edens, it seems to me, is New Ashford. Yet it is an Eden that is apparently unappreciated and likely to disappear off the map, for its dwindling inhabitants now number scarcely a hundred, and there are vacant houses even in the village center.

The place is in a tangle of steep hills, with rocky streams coursing down the hollow, and rough, irregular fields here and there crowding back the woodland. In one of the valley nooks was a tiny white church, and near it a lowly, one-room schoolhouse that clung to a slope by the wayside with a cornfield and a barnyard coming close up to its walls. The hamlet certainly was not thriving, but in picturesque charm it was a rustic gem.

I stopped there over night with a courtly old gentleman who had been selectman for thirty-six years. The rest of the family consisted of a mild faded wife, and a grim silent daughter. As we sat talking after supper my host said: "I'd like to sell out so my wife and I can have a little rest. It's time we stopped, but you can't sell a farm here. You'd have to hire some one to buy, and we don't feel like giving away our land after putting so many long years of work on it. So here we'll probably stay until we die. I keep ten cows, and my wife makes thirty pounds or more of butter a week. I drive twelve miles to Pittsfield with a load of our farm produce every Saturday. All the women there look for me on that day.

"Last week, when I was down there I had to testify in a law case. I didn't have to go to court, but to a lawyer's office, and a phonographer who wrote shorthand took down all that I said as fast as I spoke. I saw what he wrote, but I couldn't make out the first thing. It looked as if a spider had stepped on the paper and walked across.

"This daughter who is living with us is not right in her head. She married a man who drank. He was smart, but he liked liquor too well, and that spoiled everything. She's all the time imagining that he's tormenting her. About the only comfort she gets is in painting. You see the pictures on the jars and things here in the parlor, and those sheep in the frame on the wall. She painted 'em all, and I think she does it pretty good.

"You must excuse my clothes. I've been fishing today and I look like the old scratch. I went to a stream in a hollow where there's a lot of coons, and I never got a bite. A coon fishes just as well as any man, and they've cleaned the stream out.

"There's a trout pond back of the house that I made, but year before last it went dry. We had no rain for weeks, and the water went down and down, and the brook that flowed into it sank away to nothing. When the pond had dwindled to a pool we could see the big trout sailing around in there, and finally a cousin who was stopping with us caught them all. But he had a job, for a trout is a terribly tigery fellow. We had fish to eat and to throw away, but I wouldn't touch them. I'd as soon have eaten my own grandfather. I don't like to eat any of our wild creatures that we see growing and running about. I couldn't eat a rabbit or a squirrel or a partridge—not if I knew it.

"When I was a boy this town had four times as many inhabitants as it has now, and they made a better living

Harvest time

than the smaller number does at present. Only one child was born in the place last year. There's no store here, and if there was we'd run it into the ground in short order. Such times as we was without money we'd go to it and get trusted, but if we had ten cents cash in our pockets we'd go to Pittsfield and spend it.

"There used to be three taverns in this little town. That big old-fashioned house near the church was one of the most noted hostelries between Canada and Long Island Sound. Everybody could get drunk there and enjoy himself. The town had such repute as a roistering place that people used to say any person who was born and lived up to manhood and died without coming to New Ashford died a fool. About all the people drank in my youth. My father was a temperance man, but he would get ten gallons of rum every year for his two hired men to drink through haying.

"In those days great droves of cattle went through here on their way to Connecticut. They'd stop in the village over night. We've kept enough in a year at four dollars a hundred head to come to one hundred and fifty dollars. The cattle would be turned into our pasture, or, if it was autumn, into the mowing, and the drovers would bunk in anywhere about the house or barn.

"Jim Fisk, the New York financier, passed through here often as a young man driving a cart like a circus wagon with four horses attached. He was a high-toned peddler. His father visited the town too, and would

stop at the tavern. It was said that once when he was there he lied and so cheated a man out of ten cents. Later Jim was told of what his father had done, but he said: "I don't believe it. He wouldn't do anything as small as that. He wouldn't lie for ten cents, but he might tell ten lies for a dollar.'

"We have a saying here that our church was built by the devil. You see, there was no church in the place for a long time after the region was settled. One night a lot of the local men were in the bar room at the tavern drinking and they got to saying it was too bad the town didn't have a meeting-house. So, although they were as wicked a set of men as ever lived, they subscribed a hundred dollars apiece on the spot. I can remember when the church was building, and how I, like a little fool of a boy, climbed up one of the pillars of the gallery and slid back and scraped my shins.

"A student from Williams College preaches for us. He comes down with the stage driver Saturday and goes back Monday. A woman at the corner boards him and keeps him posted as to what is going on in town. She's one of the kind that feels it her duty to let the world know all that she knows. We pay this young man two dollars and a half a Sunday. He's poor and he's learning to preach, and he's got a girl he's going to marry as soon as he gets through college. So it's a very good thing for him."

Nothing can be more attractive in half wild rural roadways than those that wind through the glens of

New Ashford, and not many miles away, at Williamstown is the most beautiful town street in the county. I doubt if this is excelled in America. It is impressively broad, there are noble trees and velvet lawn, it undulates piquantly up and down the hills, here and there along it are simple old college halls that have the charm of venerable age, and modern college buildings of great architectural grace, while roundabout are the serene blue mountain ranges.

While I was loitering on the grass of the park-like street a man came shambling along and accosted me. He had been drinking, and his breath was odorous and his clothes dirty, and the flies swarmed around him as if he was a choice morsel. He was bound to talk, and I maneuvered to get where the wind would carry his aroma away from me. I did not care for his opinion as to how the president of the United States ought to run the country, and I asked him a question about Greylock, the loftiest height not only of those within view, but of all in the state.

"You see that nearest mountain," he said pointing. "You think that's pretty high, don't you? Well, it looks so; but you get on the top of Greylock and see this thing here—why, 'tain't nothing' only a little haystack. I used to live at the foot of Greylock on the western side. The first time I was ever on top of the mountain was when I was sixteen years old. There was a circus right over the other side of the mountain at Adams, and I wanted to go to it and spend seventy-

five cents that I had. So I started off to walk over the mountain, though I was a good deal scared because I didn't know but I might run against a catamount or something. I went right up to the highest part of the mountain. It was steeper on the other side, and pretty soon I come to some ledges where I couldn't see no path, and the rocks seemed to go down so perpendicular and so far that I thought I could jump right down into the town. But I found a great big pine tree growing up from below, and the top was close enough to the edge of the cliff for me to get into the branches, and I slid down it as nice as a pin. After a while I got to Adams and I had a great day at the circus and spent my seventy-five cents."

It is from the valley at Adams and the slopes east of the town that Greylock is seen most imposingly. The mountain rises in steep inclines and precipices to a height of thirty-five hundred feet, and seems twice as big as when viewed at a distance on its less abrupt approaches. Probably it is most beautiful when its lofty form peers out vaguely from the mists like a piece of heaven.

The last place where I stopped in the county was Savoy, another of the unthriving smaller villages. It was far up in a hollow among the wooded ridges, and a clear trout brook flowed along only a stone's throw from the cluster of houses that huddled about the two little churches. One of the industries of the region was the gathering of ferns. A wagon piled high with large

boxes full of the ferns passed through the hamlet while I was there on its way to the railroad. The ferns were to be shipped to a city and kept in cold storage until there was a demand for them in the fall and winter.

"Some of the people here make six or seven dollars a day picking those ferns," an old man in the village informed me. "They don't any of 'em want to farm, and when they get a good chance they move away. Twenty-five years ago these two churches used to be full every Sunday morning. The people drove in from all around. Now there are fewer of 'em and they don't care much about going to meeting anyway. The Methodist church is not used, and they can't raise a congregation of thirty in the other.

"I had a hotel here when I was younger. It was a long, two-story building with a good-sized wing. There was a big dance hall in it, and people came here to dance from the valley towns and everywhere. They'd eat a turkey supper and then dance most all night. I had old Dick Briggs up from North Adams to call off. Besides, I hired from there a band of six pieces, and if they got blowed over the fence on the way home I was expected to pay the damages. Yes, once the wagon they was in blew up against a fence down in the valley, and the fellow with the big fiddle went over the fence. They sent me a bill for damages afterward.

"There was lots of trout them times, and I kept men fishing for 'em and had trout suppers and dinners that people were glad to come a long distance to get. One

of my patrons was a young man who was the son of a wealthy manufacturer, and he'd make things howl around here. Oh, he was a highroller! One of his tricks was to take a bundle of hay out in the road, buy a gallon of kerosene to pour on it and have a bonfire. He went to college, but I don't know whether he got any education or not. His father made him treasurer of the mill, and one time he went off to a yacht race and lost seventy-five thousand dollars betting. He took the payroll money to settle with, and then his father had to make good the loss.

"A young physician had an office at the far end of the hotel, and one spring evening he filled his stove full of dry stuff and went off and left it burning. He ate supper and then stood out in front of the hotel talking with some feller who'd been fishing. The next thing we knew fire was coming out of the roof over the doctor's office. The garret was all one long apartment full of rubbish, and the fire went through there as fast as a horse could run. Of course the neighbors all came to do what they could and they carried out the feather beds and threw the mirrors and breakable things out of the windows. The hotel barn would have burned if men hadn't got onto the roof and spread wet blankets. I was a big fool for saving that barn. It wasn't worth much separate from the hotel, and I had five hundred dollars insurance on it."

Notes.—Berkshire, with its great variety of scenery, both rugged and pastoral, is one of the most attractive resort regions of New

England. At Lenox there is not a hilltop or a valley but has its splendid house and far-flung attendant gardens, and each mansion commands some natural mountain vista of great beauty. One of the striking charms of the larger towns is their broad tree-lined park-like streets. The historic and literary associations of the country make a strong appeal to the pride of the residents and the interest of the visitors. In the Stockbridge Valley the Housatonic or "good" Indians had their chief abode. The credit of Christianizing them belongs to John Sargent, who came into the wilderness here at the age of twenty-four mastered their language, and preached three or four sermons a week to them. At the west end of Stockbridge's Main Street is the old Indian burial ground.

In 1751 that greatest of colonial preachers, Jonathan Edwards, came to Stockbridge to assist in the task of converting the red heathen. His grandson, the notorious Aaron Burr, spent a part of his boyhood in the town. The poet Bryant for a time practiced law in Great Barrington, and found inspiration in the vicinity for a number of his poems. Hawthorne lived at Lenox when he wrote "Tanglewood Tales." Holmes had an estate in Pittsfield, and Longfellow passed his summers in one of the town homes and there wrote "The Old Clock on the Stairs."

At the north end of the country is Williamstown with its famous college, and Greylock, monarch of the Massachusetts mountains. A road ascends to the summit of the mountain, and in good weather automobiles can make the trip. Through Williamstown and easterly over Hoosac Mountain passed the trail of the Mohawks, and this is still dimly visible in places.

The main highways of Berkshire are excellent for motoring, and most of the byways are passable except in unfavorable weather. As for the mountainous sections, these are the tramper's paradise with their enticing paths and woodroads. The region is at its best in spring when the leaves and blossoms are putting forth, or in autumn when the foliage is aflame with tints of scarlet and gold,

but the beauty of midsummer and the white glory of the winters are scarcely less worthy of being enjoyed.

Balanced Rock is the county's greatest natural curiosity. This is reached by a pleasant drive northeasterly from Pittsfield. Its height is eighteen feet, its weight about one hundred and fifty tons, and it rests on one square foot of surface; and yet it is so evenly balanced as to be readily swayed by a man's weight.

The foreign-looking Main Street

VIII

THE PORT OF THE FISHERMEN

THE fame of Gloucester as the greatest of American fishing ports, and the fact that so many of its inhabitants spend their lives in an unusually picturesque and dangerous calling lend it a peculiar charm. It is on the rock-ribbed outreach of Cape Ann, and from the summits of its steep hills you can look far off over the hazy ocean, while on the narrow, irregular streets of its waterfront with their noisy saloons and numerous dingy, broken-windowed buildings you see many weather-browned sailor folk and get frequent glimpses of the fishing-vessels lying at the wharves. Then, too, there are odors—salty, fishy smells that are agreeably suggestive when not too pronounced, but which in some sections make you step along in haste to escape them, and there are times when the entire town is enveloped with the aroma from certain outlying glue factories.

My acquaintance with Gloucester began on a summer afternoon when it was in gala attire celebrating an Old Home Week holiday. The business streets were crowded, and I was glad to get off them down to the wharves. There I found everything very quiet, the buildings closed, the acres of flake yards, where the

fish are dried, vacant, and almost no work being done. Presently I happened on a group of loafers—"old Homeweekers," they called themselves. They were in a spar yard—a space strewn with chips and shavings and long, straight logs, some in the rough, and some smooth and round and nearly ready to be fitted onto the vessels. The loafers were socially inclined, the more so, no doubt, because they had been indulging rather freely in whiskey. One of them had fallen into the water. He looked bedraggled, yet was cheerfully smoking his pipe and seemed to think his ducking had been quite a humorous performance.

The most voluble of the group slapped me familiarly on the back and said: "I'll tell you just how it happened. I'll give it to you straight. Our friend here fell in—we have those occasions that way, you know. He stepped into a dory, and it tilted and tipped him out. The rest of us shouted, 'Man overboard!' and started to run to help him. But he was in no special danger. It was low tide and the water was so shallow he could stand on the bottom and hold on to the side of the boat. One of the soberest of us soon got him by the collar and drew him out to give him one more drink on shore."

When this narrative was concluded I resumed my rambling, and by and by I came across a skipper and a sailor on a rather small and rusty schooner. We exchanged greetings and I climbed abroad. The deck was cluttered with ropes, anchors, coils of fishlines, and similar truck, and near the bow was a nest of dories—

several rowboats set one inside of the other. The skipper was looking over his fishing-gear and trying to figure out some problem in connection with increasing the number of hooks on the lines. He thought he ought to solve the difficulty easily; for when he was a lad he had gone through one book of algebra and started another. "Yes," he said, "I was well educated, and at the age of fourteen I knew five different languages. My parents were Swedes living in Finland; so I learned to talk their language and the language of the country, and it was easy in the town where we had our home to pick up Russian, German and English. Finland is a fine country, if it wasn't for the way the Russians treat the inhabitants."

"Ah, dose Russians!" the sailor exclaimed. "I don't know why dey are so savage. Dose are der people, by gosh, dat der missionaries ought to be sent to civilize!"

"Well," the skipper said, continuing his personal story, "I went to sea because that was the only way to get rid of bad companions I'd fallen in with; and the men ain't all angels on the sea, either. I've sailed most everywhere—had eight days in a week crossing the Pacific, and all that sort of thing."

But of late years he had been the captain of a Gloucester fishing schooner. "It's curious, the way we manage," he said. "I take this vessel which belongs to a firm here, and go off with it and handle ten or twelve thousand dollars that the fish we catch during a year sell for, and never give any security. It's the same

with the rest of the skippers. There's no class of shore people who could get trusted that way. When we are starting off on a trip we buy food, bait, ice, and such things all on tick, to be paid for at the end of the voyage. One-fourth of one per cent of the total receipts goes to the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, and a quarter of the balance is for the boat, and the rest, after taking out the expenses, is for the fishermen. There are ten men go on this boat. Suppose we come in with a stock of one thousand dollars. The boat gets two hundred and fifty, and the expenses are about two hundred. That leaves five hundred and fifty dollars, or fifty-five dollars apiece.

"We all share exactly alike except the cook, who is given ten dollars extra. You see it depends more on him than on any one else whether we have a good voyage or not. He can make the trip shorter or longer just as he pleases. If he ain't kept good natured he'll like enough oblige you to start for home before you've got a full fare. For instance, he may use the water to extreme, taking fresh when salt would do just as well. I've had plenty of water on board for four weeks, and it would hardly last half that time. Then he may boil for one meal food enough to last two days and heave overboard what ain't eaten.

"After we reach port, the minute the fish are out of the vessel, we get a check for 'em, and if it's before the banks close we settle up that day and every man is at liberty. The captain's share is the same as that of the

others; but twice a year the owners pay him from three to ten per cent of what the boat itself has earned. There's a sharp competition to get the skippers that make the biggest catches, and such men can command fancy pay.

"The money the fishermen receive goes in all sorts of ways, good and bad. Some sailors, even if a trip netted 'em a hundred dollars a day, would spend it as freely as they made it, and you can't get 'em to go again till their money's all gone. The vessel lies in port a couple of days or so and then starts on another cruise. I used to take four or five fishermen and the rest greenhorns; but the greenhorns so soon got to know more'n I did that I ain't goin' to break in any more.

"The skipper has got to deal square with his crew, for if he ain't pretty honest they won't go with him. One poor settlement and they are done. Then, too, it's impossible to get the men behind the gun unless he's generally successful. If he don't make money they'll find places in other vessels.

"We have to go farther and work harder to get a cargo of fish than we used to. Fifty years ago boats would come into Boston so loaded with fish they couldn't sell 'em all and would have to go out to sea and dump the rest overboard. We don't dump any fish nowadays, and if it wasn't for the hatcheries there'd be a complete famine in 'em. They're nowhere near so plentiful, but we make as much as ever we did because the price is a great deal higher."

This skipper spoke rather lightly of the dangers of the business, though he mentioned a recent trip when they had a thrilling experience in a fog. They heard a great steamer coming. Not a breath of wind was stirring, and the schooner lay helpless right in the path of the approaching monster; but their fog-horn was heard in time to allow the steamer to stop its engines and shift its course, or the little boat would have been crushed like an eggshell.

When a schooner arrives on the fishing grounds the dories are hoisted overboard and, with two men in each, go out to set the trawls. A trawl is a line about a mile long from which a thousand hooks hang on smaller lines two or three feet in length. At each end of the trawl is a keg float, and these floats are marked with the vessel's name. They are anchored, and the trawl rests on the bottom. In fine weather the dories are out early every day taking up the trawls. A boat starts at one end of a trawl, and as fast as the men remove the fish from the hooks and put on fresh bait they throw the line overboard. The schooner itself does not anchor, but cruises around in the neighborhood of the trawls. While the dories are out the captain and cook who remain on board handle the ship and keep a sharp lookout for possible danger.

The Grand Banks of Newfoundland are the great fishing-ground on this side of the Atlantic, and there you find vessels all the year round. It is a chilly and foggy region, and in winter its dreariness and danger

are increased by frequent gales and snowstorms. If sky or sea show any hint of threatening weather while a schooner's crew is out a recall signal is hoisted. But sometimes the gale rises so suddenly that one or more of the dories to leeward fail to get back. The strong tides of the Banks and the shoal waters help to pile up the great combing seas, and very likely it is bitterly cold. What chance have the fishermen in their frail little crafts to withstand the keen blasts and raging waters? Not infrequently a dory with two dead bodies in it, or more often empty and perhaps tossed bottom-up by the waves, is all that tells the story of a lost boat and its crew.

Every year, too, dories go hopelessly astray in the sudden winter fogs. The fishermen who fail to reach the schooner find themselves enveloped in a dense chilling mass of gloom, without food and without water. One would think each dory might carry a few emergency supplies, but the fishermen seem to prefer to take chances. When the fog lifts they have drifted many miles and are being borne by winds and currents they know not whither. Sometimes they make land or are picked up by a passing vessel; but usually, death comes after long days of hunger and thirst, hands frozen to oars, and possibly madness. When the schooner on which they sailed returns to port it enters the harbor with its flag at half-mast.

Winter is the time especially to be dreaded, yet one of the most destructive gales in all the tragic list was

in the summer of 1873. It occurred on a Sunday, a very peaceful day in Gloucester, and no suspicion was aroused for the welfare of the fleet until Tuesday when news arrived of a terrible storm to the eastward all along the Canadian coast. Houses were blown down, trees torn up by the roots, and the tidal wave which accompanied the storm carried the wrecked vessels far above high water mark and left them stranded. Gloucester lost one hundred and twenty-eight men, a number greater by far than in any one previous gale.

There is perhaps no other business which is pursued at such a fearful hazard to life and property. Insurance rates on the vessels are from eight to ten per cent. a year; and until comparatively recently the records showed an average annual loss of about sixteen vessels and one hundred and nine lives. The grimness of these figures is emphasized by the fact that though Gloucester contributed a large number of men to the army and navy during the Civil War, yet decidedly more of its citizens were drowned on the fishing voyages than perished from the casualties of the war for the same period. But no matter how many victims the sea may claim, new men are always ready to take the vacant places, and there is no halt in the procession that leads to an ocean grave. It is to be noted, however, that for some time now there has been an almost complete elimination of the foundering at sea of vessels with entire crews. This is due to a change in the design of the fishing-vessels which at present have greater depth

The harbor

and a lighter stern than the old type. This has reduced the fatalities fully two-thirds.

When a schooner is on a cruise the decision as to just where it shall fish depends a great deal on the depth of the water and the character of the bottom. By constant sounding with the lead line an expert captain gets to know the realm beneath the waters very thoroughly. The lead has a hollow at its lower extremity in which a little grease is inserted so that a sample of the sea bottom may be secured. The story is told of a certain old Nantucket skipper who could invariably tell just where he was by examining the soil his lead brought up. In order to perplex him, his crew once put some garden loam from the home island in the cup of the lead, made a pretense of sounding, and then asked the skipper to name the position of the vessel. The old fisherman tasted the dirt on the lead—his favorite method of determining its individuality—and suddenly exclaimed, "Nantucket's sunk, and here we are right over Ma'am Hackett's garden!"

Whether the fish are decreasing or not is a question on which there is considerable difference of opinion. Life multiplies in the sea wonderfully, and at the same time the water is a scene of boundless destruction. There is perpetual warfare among the fishes, and the rulers of the deep are the strongest, the swiftest and the most voracious. The carnage is appalling; but without it the ocean would soon be unable to contain its inhabitants. Probably few fishes die a natural

death, and some seem to have been created solely to devour others. It is doubtful if there is any species which does not feed on some other species or its own. Compared with the enormous consumption of fish by birds and by each other, the destruction due to the agency of man, with all his ingenious fishing devices, dwindles into insignificance; and yet it may be just this additional slaughter which disturbs nature's nice balance.

The shore fisheries are certainly not what they used to be; but there are men well-versed in the business who claim that on the Banks, cod, hake and haddock are as plentiful as ever. Halibut, on the other hand, are acknowledged to be constantly decreasing. As to mackerel and herring it is not easy to decide. They are migratory fish that come and go, some years abundant and other years few; but why, no one knows. If there is a gamble in any form of fishing it is in the pursuit of the mackerel. A fleet fits out in the spring to meet these fish coming north, and half the vessels "won't get enough to pay their grub bill," while the rest will make good profits.

The number of fishermen who go from Gloucester is about five thousand, but the majority of them are natives of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland. As a class they are a whole-souled and admirable type of manhood, equal or superior in character and thrift to the average of humanity on shore. Probably one-half of the five million dollars in the

Gloucester savings banks is deposited to the credit of fishermen. Their usual earnings are about eight hundred dollars a year outside of board. Some of the captains clear five or six thousand dollars. The crews are made up of picked men, for skippers won't take weaklings or loafers. A good many of the men must have their blowout when they get ashore, but not more than a quarter of them are hard drinkers, and fully as large a proportion do not drink at all. Most of the blowsy, sodden loiterers one sees in the neighborhood of the Gloucester waterside are of a quite different class from the fishermen. They are what is known as "lumpers"—that is, they are shore workers who discharge cargoes and do other jobs about the vessels and wharves for a lump sum.

These fishermen are rarely illiterates. Practically all of them are able to read and write and to transact without assistance the necessary business connected with their voyages. You will not find a man but that can figure out what is coming to him and he knows the amount to a cent, though some of them might not be able to figure anything else.

Perhaps their most remarkable trait is courage, for they brave death with apparent unconcern. A Gloucester citizen told me of a voyage he made in a fishing schooner which encountered a fierce storm one night in a bay of Prince Edward's Island. They were enveloped in inky darkness and when they attempted to escape to the open sea the wind was dead ahead. A

seine boat in tow behind filled and turned over, and the jib broke loose from the mast and trailed in the water at the bow. Several attempts were made to get out on the jib-boom to cut away the retarding sail, but the waves broke so furiously over the bow that the men could not withstand the sledge-hammer blows of the toppling crests. The captain declared the boat could not weather the night. Yet not one man of the eighteen that composed the crew showed the white feather. The only uneasy creature on board was a dog in the cabin, and he was howling with fear. Every time he felt himself dashed about, as the vessel careened wildly amid the waves, he let forth an agonizing yelp.

The captain, on whose decisions depended the fate of the vessel, had concluded they could not beat around the headland into the open sea, and that they were sure to go on the rocks. The only chance he saw for saving any of their lives was to turn and drive directly for the shore. He therefore jibbed, and a few minutes on the new course would have sent them all to the bottom. But after a moment he again turned the prow seaward and they finally succeeded in clearing the dangerous point—and through all the terrors of the night the crew never evinced the least symptom of fear.

One curious characteristic of the sailors is their faith in superstitions. In particular, they have an ineradicable belief in "Jonahs." A person or thing that causes a poor voyage is a Jonah. If a single new man joins a crew and there is a small catch of fish that cruise, he

Cleaning fish

is a Jonah. One man is known to have hoodooed three schooners thus in a twelve-month. Very strange instances are related of ships "losing their luck" when a certain man sailed on them, and regaining it when he left.

If a cake of ice is accidently dropped overboard when a vessel is preparing for a fishing trip the voyage will be fortunate; but if the hatch should fall into the hold there will result some dire disaster. Scarcely less serious is the trouble that will follow if, when the hatch is taken off, it is turned bottom up. In such a case there is sure to be a good deal of excitement and apprehension on board.

If you watch a ship out of sight you will never see it again.

It is unlucky to have an umbrella brought on board.

It is unlucky to drive nails on Sunday.

Whistle for a breeze when it is calm; and if you would have the wind fair stick a knife in the after side of the main-mast.

If a bee or a small bird comes on board it brings good luck; but ill luck results when a hawk, owl, or crow alights in the rigging.

A horsehoe nailed to the mast is a protection against witches.

Have nothing to do with a man who comes on board with a black valise, and don't ship with him; for he is sure to be a Jonah.

Sunday sail, never fail,
Friday sail, ill luck and gale.

This last saying has lost much of its old-time influence, and Friday is a not unusual sailing-day if the weather is favorable.

On one of my rambles about the wharves I chanced to observe several cats on a schooner that was preparing to leave; and a member of the crew told me that it was very common for vessels to carry a few pet cats. "The sea seems to suit 'em very well," he said, "only they won't come on deck when it blows because it's too wet. In fine weather they're out around most of the time. We've got lots of rats and mice in the ship, but the cats don't often catch 'em there's so many places for 'em to hide. In the spring we smoked the ship out with sulphur to smother 'em, but they wa'n't all killed, and they're gettin' plenty again. They eat up piles of things for the cook—oh, gracious, yes! and clothes. Sometimes, too, they run over you when you're asleep and wake you up."

The vessel next to that which carried the cats had just reached port with a cargo of salt, and its skipper attracted my attention. He was walking the deck in evident unrest, and a dent in his derby hat added to his aspect of hasty vigor. Presently an old Irishman appeared on the wharf above, and the skipper called out, "Are you one of the shovellers who are going to unload this cargo?"

"Yes," the newcomer replied.

"Well, there'll be three others," the skipper said, "and a pair of horses. You holler when you see them

horses comin'—them black and blue horses with stripes around 'em," he added with a twinkle in his eyes.

I did not await the advent of these remarkable beasts, but wandered into a near-by flake yard where a squad of men was busy spreading salted fish on the long lines of slatted rocks to dry. "Doesn't the salt have any bad effect on your hands?" I asked the workers.

"No," the boss said, "it toughens 'em; and if you have a cut finger or anything of that sort the salt will help it to heal. The cut may smart, but it's gettin' better just the same. Salt is healthy inside or out. I eat much as a pound a day. I can't get mackerel any too salt to suit me, and I just cover my beef or pork with it. The doctors used to say salt dried up the blood, but now they prescribe it as a medicine."

A companion then told what his taste was in regard to salt. After that they compared notes as to how their fathers liked it, and started in on their grandfathers, when I concluded I didn't care to pursue the subject to any more remote generations and came away. On a neighboring street I stopped to speak with a short elderly man who was leaning in comfortable leisure against a telephone pole at the edge of the sidewalk. He proved to be one of Gloucester's notables—a successful merchant, and the inventor of various improvements in fishing apparatus. In the course of our chat he became reminiscent, and said, "When I was a boy, I had a mother and younger children to support, and I could only earn five dollars a month on shore; so I went

to sea. The years slipped along and I made some money, and finally went down to Texas. There I lost seventy thousand dollars through a rascally relative, and then I come back here to start over again. One thing that I knew was needed was a good foghorn. Until about 1880 our fishing schooners didn't have any at all, and the men would blow a conch shell or a tin horn. Then a clumsy imported mechanical horn was introduced. Well, I spent two years with my head between my knees thinkin' it out—that's the reason I'm so round shouldered. But I was determined to make my foghorn so perfect it never could be improved any more; and I did."

He had a combination store and manufactory not far away and took me to see it. There he sold all sorts of nautical supplies and handled more fish-hooks than any other concern in this country. It was a big rambling wooden structure, a curious labyrinth to explore, and the business had grown from a little shop that occupied only a few square feet of one floor. "But I begun small," he said, "so if I didn't succeed I wouldn't have far to fall."

Gloucester has not many men perhaps of this inventive type; but self-reliance, courage, and all-around ability are general, and it has as much of the romance suggestive of the days of fable as one could find anywhere in our modern American world.

Notes.—Gloucester is thirty-eight miles from Boston. There is macadam road all the way. The visitor finds much of interest in the

old buildings of the city and its fishing industry and in the picturesque features of the adjacent shore and region inland. Norman's Woe, made famous by Longfellow's "Wreck of the Hesperus," is off the suburb of Magnolia.

Half way to Boston is old Salem, which ranked tenth in size among the cities of the country at the end of the colonial period but is now the one hundred and twentieth. Here are many historical houses, including the birthplace of Hawthorne, and the old witch house, once the residence of Roger Williams, built in 1635. The city has one of the best historical museums in the country, in connection with which has been preserved the quaintest little colonial church in existence.

Somewhat beyond Salem is Marblehead, one of the most interesting of American seashore resorts. The old town house was built in 1727. Other noteworthy features of the place are the old fort, the old powder house, and the Skipper Ireson house.

Of the Massachusetts coast towns north of Gloucester probably none would better repay a visit than Newburyport. Here are many old residences, of which the best known are the birthplace of William Lloyd Garrison and the Lord Timothy Dexter mansion. The old cemetery merits a visit. On the beach in the vicinity is the Devil's Den Cave where during the witchcraft delusion the devils were supposed to dwell.

IX

THE LAND OF THE MINUTE MEN

IN the tragic beginnings of the War for Independence the minute men played a conspicuous part, and not only their deeds, but the name bestowed on them, appeal keenly to the imagination. They were called into being by the first Provincial Congress of Massachusetts which met in Concord in the autumn of 1774. A conflict with the mother country was plainly at hand, and these bodies of minute men were to be ready at the briefest notice to hurry armed and equipped to points where danger threatened.

The region especially identified with them is in and about Lexington and Concord and few historic spots are so easily accessible or so richly repay a visit. The former is only seventeen miles from Boston, and Concord is six miles beyond. My trip was made in the latter part of April at the very season of the old combat which was the precursor of the long war for freedom. I reached Lexington Common in the dusk of evening. The sod was turning green, and the elms were beginning to tassel out. Robins sang among the trees, and I could hear frogs piping in the marshes. I secured lodging near by, and then night came—a chilly, moonlit night, the exact counterpart, I fancied, of the

The Lexington minute man

night of the eighteenth of the same month back in 1775.

With the first gray of the morning I awoke and looked forth from my window out over the quiet village vague in the pallid dawn. That was just about the hour when the British troops had arrived on their march from Boston. They knew that the Massachusetts rebels had been collecting military supplies at Concord, and these supplies they proposed to destroy. Every farmer's barn in the place, the town house, the tavern shed, and the miller's loft, served as storerooms for provisions and munitions of war, and had the British succeeded in their undertaking they would have seriously crippled the incipient rebellion. Eight hundred strong, they stealthily left Boston at ten o'clock in the evening just as the moon rose, crossed in boats to Cambridge, and began their march.

But their departure did not escape the attention of the Boston patriots, who promptly displayed a signal light from the spire of the Old North Church, and soon messengers on the mainland had mounted their horses and were galloping away along the country roads to carry the alarm. One of the messengers, Paul Revere, reached Lexington about midnight, and a few minutes later the meeting-house bell was ringing to bring together the minute men.

The meeting-house stood on the corner of the triangular two-acre common where the road comes from Boston, and just across the highway to the east was

Buckman's Tavern. Roundabout, fronting toward the green, were several farmhouses, and a blacksmith's shop. The common itself was rougher then than now, and instead of having its present fine elms it was comparatively bare. There the minute men formed in ranks; but the cool, damp spring night was far from comfortable, and when messengers sent out on the Boston road returned and reported everything quiet, they concluded Revere had been mistaken. Those who lived near went home, but most, including their leader, Captain Parker, resorted to Buckman's Tavern. The night wore away and dawn was at hand when the men in the tavern heard galloping hoofs approaching. They hurried out, and a messenger halted his panting steed and announced that the British were close at hand. Captain Parker ordered his men at once to the common, and had guns fired and drums beaten to rouse the region.

The minute men, about fifty in number, formed in a double line near the northeast corner of the green, and at a little before five o'clock, the enemy appeared and marched onto the common from around the meeting-house. Major Pitcairn, the second in command of the British expedition, ordered the Americans to disperse, and some, impressed by his authority, and the overpowering numbers of the opposing force, were ready to obey. Captain Parker, however, declared he would shoot any man who left the ranks, and in conclusion said, "Stand your ground. Don't fire unless fired on; but if they mean to have a war let it begin here."

When Major Pitcairn saw that the squad of countrymen paid no attention to his command he discharged his pistol, and with angry oaths called on his men to fire. The first volley was sent over the Americans' heads, but the second rank fired right into the midst of the band of farmers. The Lexington men now scattered, and in a desultory way discharged their guns at the smoke-enveloped enemy, but inflicted no serious damage. Of their own number, Captain Parker and six of his followers were killed.

The green has continued unaltered in size from colonial days until now, and from it can be seen several of the same dwellings that were there then. The most notable of these is the Harrington house, to the front door of which Jonathan Harrington, sorely wounded, dragged himself after the fight and died on the threshold in the arms of his wife.

I chatted with a town employee who was picking up twigs on the common and mentioned that I intended to visit Concord. "Oh! you're going to the Holy City, are you?" he commented.

That was his way of recognizing Concord to be the Mecca of all pilgrims interested in history or literature. My route thither was by the old hill road which was the road traversed by the British. The country along the way is still rustic, and though there is less woodland than at the time of the Revolution forest patches are by no means lacking, and there are numerous brushy, ruinous stone walls, and many substantial

old-time homes with the portly chimneys that show they date back to fireplace days. The weather was sunshiny and breezy, jubilant song sparrows trilled in the thickets, and I saw frequent blue-birds and heard the gentle call of the phœbes. Human life was also in evidence; for the farmers were drawing wood, getting out fertilizer, and ploughing, just as their predecessors in the region had done at that season for generations, even back to the time of the minute men.

Concord is a pleasant country town in a mild, alluvial valley. The valley is not in itself particularly attractive, but the village with its various venerable houses, its white, wooden churches, and serene common is wholly delightful. So are all the villages of the region that have not been overrun by suburban Boston.

On my walk from Lexington I had passed a number of roadside inscriptions, each locating the scene of some important episode in the old British raid. The one that was perhaps the most interesting marked the spot where Paul Revere was captured. After warning Lexington he had resumed his ride accompanied by another courier, and they had not gone far when they were joined by Dr. Prescott of Concord who had learned of the foray and was hastening home with the news. They gave the alarm at every house as they passed until they were brought to a sudden halt by a reconnoitering party of the enemy. Prescott was the only one of the three to escape. He jumped his horse over a wall, and by a circuitous route reached Concord

Where the battle was fought at Concord bridge

about three o'clock. So there was time to get out the minute men and to secrete many of the military stores.

When at length the British came, the minute men fell back across the North Bridge, and the enemy took possession of the village. They began to burn such spoils as they could lay their hands on, and the smoke rose in a cloud over the common. But they destroyed very little compared with what remained untouched. For instance, one of the dwellings they ransacked was Colonel Barrett's. Some of the stores that they thought to find there had been transported to the woods, and the rest had been concealed in casks in the garret. Over the casks Mrs. Barrett had put a quantity of feathers, thus averting any suspicion, and no search was made beneath. On the premises of another citizen they found sixty barrels of flour. They beat open several of the barrels and the flour was scattered around the road so that the ground looked as if there had been a fall of snow; but most of the barrels were dumped unbroken into an adjacent mill pond. As soon, however, as the British were gone, the Yankees drew off the pond and got the barrels out onto dry ground. Very little water had penetrated them and the flour was only slightly injured.

Fighting began in the middle of the morning at the North Bridge, and the three companies of British troopers who had been posted there retreated in confusion to the town. The commanders of the expedition began to be alarmed, and after some uncertain marching

and counter-marching the entire force started for Boston. They had gone scarcely more than a mile when they were ambushed and the retreat became a rout. Their pursuers preserved little or no order, and every man chose his own time and mode of attack, taking shelter behind buildings, trees, and stone walls. The whole countryside was now aroused, and the invaders might have been all killed or captured had not reinforcements reached them. The fresh troops formed in a hollow square, and into the shelter of this square their comrades hastened, many of them so overcome with weariness and heat that they lay on the ground with tongues hanging out and panting like a tired dog. The fight ended only when they reached Charlestown, where they were protected by the guns of their fleet. Nearly one-fourth of those who started on the expedition had been killed, and the American loss in killed was about seventy.

That morning, when Major Pitcairn reached Concord, he had called for a glass of brandy, and as he stirred it with his finger, said, "I mean to stir the damned Yankee blood as I stir this, before night!"

He succeeded, but not with the results he had expected.

Concord's most important point of Revolutionary attraction is the old bridge where was fired "the shot that was heard round the world," though, really, I think Lexington has first claim to that shot. The present bridge is a simple open structure, of much the

same appearance as the one which figured in the fight, but the road across it is no longer a highway and comes to a sudden end a little beyond the stream.

Not far away is "The Old Manse," which at the time of the Revolution was the dwelling of Ralph Waldo Emerson's grandfather, the Concord minister. From a window the reverend gentleman watched the combat at the bridge. The house is a ponderous mansion, far back from the road and looks lonely, unsociable, and even gloomy. Here Emerson himself lived when he first came to Concord in 1834. Most of his early life had been spent in Boston; but he craved "solitude," and he resorted to Concord rather than to some other country town because it was an ancestral home of the family. In the Manse he wrote many poems and his first published book; but after two years he moved to a house on the opposite outskirts of the village. This house, which continued to be his home until his death, is a white, immaculate dwelling of generous proportions, open to the sun, and having a certain stately cheerfulness, quite in keeping with the character of its famous occupant.

In the spring of 1843 Hawthorne came to live in the Old Manse bringing with him his bride, and he gave the house its name. The villagers seldom saw him, for he avoided the town in his walks and made no efforts to cultivate acquaintances. It was his habit to bathe every summer evening, after nightfall, in the river near the old bridge where the battle was fought. The three

years he spent at the Manse were for him a period of distressing hardship, and he was compelled to return to his native town of Salem where he received an appointment in the Custom House. Six years later, after after having achieved much literary success and a measure of financial reward, he again resorted to Concord and bought and remodelled a house which he called "The Wayside." It is a peculiar and rather shapeless structure not far from the home of Emerson, with a steep slope behind it clad with evergreens.

Hawthorne's next neighbor to the south was Ephraim Bull, the originator of the Concord Grape. Mr. Bull had moved from Boston to Concord on account of his health, and grape-raising became a passion with him. He planted in his garden the best varieties he could obtain, but none of these could be relied on for a crop, even in favorable seasons. Wild grapes abounded in the vicinity, and from one of the seeds of these, dropped perhaps by a bird, there sprang up a vine on the borders of the garden that bore fruit of uncommonly good flavor, with little of the foxy taste usual in its kind. So Mr. Bull gave it care and cultivation, planted some of its seeds, and watched and waited. Only one of the seedlings proved worth saving; but that was the famous Concord. He picked the first grapes from it in 1849, and the original vine still grows, while its progeny have gone everywhere.

To the north, Hawthorne's nearest neighbor was Bronson Alcott, who continued to occupy "Orchard

House," as he called it, for a considerable period, though his habit or fate during most of his previous married life had been to move on an average about once a year. In the library at Orchard House were held the first sessions of the Concord School of Philosophy, and in that same room Mr. Alcott's daughter Louisa wrote several of her famous books for children. The house seemed to me a somewhat finicky structure of the bird-cage order, but it was shadowed by an ancient elm of noble size and proportions that relieved the architectural shortcomings of the dwelling.

Of the group of literary notables who in the middle of the last century made Concord their home, Thoreau, the most peculiar genius of them all, is the only one who was Concord born. In 1837, at the age of twenty, after graduating from Harvard, he for a short time taught a school in his native town, and then he applied himself to the business in which his father was engaged —the manufacture of lead pencils. He believed he could make a better pencil than was then in use; but when he succeeded and his friends congratulated him that he had now opened his way to fortune he responded that he would never make another pencil. "Why should I?" he said. "I would not do again what I have done once."

So he turned his attention to miscellaneous studies and to nature. When he wanted money he earned it by some piece of manual labor agreeable to him, such as building a boat or a fence, planting, or surveying. He

never married, rarely went to church, did not vote, refused to pay a tax to the state, ate no flesh, drank no wine, did not use tobacco; and in the estimation of his fellow-townsmen he was for a long time simply an oddity, but they at length came to revere and admire him.

His senses were remarkably acute. He could pace sixteen rods more accurately than another man could measure them with rod and chain. He could find his path in the woods at night, he said, better by his feet than his eyes. He could estimate the weight of a pig or a calf like a dealer. From a box containing a bushel or more of loose pencils, he could take up with his hands just a dozen pencils at every grasp.

It was his custom to spend a portion of each day in the fields or woods or on the Concord River. He knew the country like a fox or a bird. Under his arm he carried an old music book in which to press plants, and his pockets contained his diary, a spy-glass, microscope, jackknife, and twine. If he saw in a tree a hawk's or a squirrel's nest that attracted him he climbed up to investigate, and he often waded into pools after water plants.

The best known episode in his life is the experience he embodied in the book to which he gave the title of "Walden." He was dissatisfied with society, and wanted to prove that he could get along comfortably depending wholly on himself for providing food and other necessaries, and have plenty of time for enjoyment. So in March, 1845, at the age of twenty-eight,

Old stone fences that served to shelter the attacking farmers

he "borrowed an ax and went to the woods by Walden Pond." This pond is two or three miles south of the village, an irregular sheet of water with an average breadth of half a mile. It is without visible inlet or outlet and is remarkable for its depth and purity.

Thoreau bought an old shanty, tore it down, and carried it piecemeal to the pond on a wheelbarrow. He did all the work of making the house himself, including the digging of a cellar; and the entire cost was less than thirty dollars. The cabin had no lock, no curtain to the window, and belonged to nature almost as much as its owner did. Here he dwelt for a little over two years, and then, he says: "I left the woods for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live, and could not spare any more time for that one."

The cabin became the property of a farmer who took it away from the woods to his own premises; but the spot where it stood is marked by a cairn of stones, to which every lover of Thoreau's genius who goes thither adds a stone from the shore of the near cove. Apparently the borders of the pond present much the same aspect they did in Thoreau's time. Some portions of the slopes along the water are still finely wooded, but a little farther back are forlorn cut-off wastes growing up to scrub oak. The pond's greatest charm of course lies in past associations; and it is just this, beyond all else, which lends fascination to all the region of the land of the minute men.

NOTES.—The main roads in the region are macadam. These and the steam roads and the trollies offer unusual facilities to the sightseer. Boston is near at hand with its many attractions, historical and architectural as well as those connected with business and pleasure. Cambridge, too, can be easily visited, where, among other objects of interest, are Harvard College, the oldest and best known institution of learning in the United States; the elm under which Washington took command of the American army in July, 1775; the homes of Longfellow and Lowell; and Mount Auburn, the oldest cemetery in the United States, and in which are buried many famous persons. Another place particularly worthy of a visit is Brookline, a wonderland of beautiful estates and charming houses. It is the wealthiest town in America.

X

AUTUMN ON CAPE COD

MY acquaintance with the cape began at Sandwich where it starts its outthrust into the Atlantic, and I travelled in an irregular way, with frequent stops, to its very tip. Autumn had come. The days were still warm, but the nights were decidedly chilly, and early in my jaunt a man whom I interviewed in his cranberry bog informed me that there had been a white frost on the low grounds the previous night.

"I was afeard our crop would be hurt," he said; "so I was out till most twelve o'clock keepin' some brush fires goin' around the edges of the bog. The fires ain't expected to warm the air much, but they make a smoke which settles over the level hollow of the bog and is a kind of protecting blanket.

"We begin pickin' here early in September, and the last of the berries ain't gathered until toward the end of October. Often the bogs are three or four miles from a village, and then the pickers have to make an early start. They all go together in a truck cart. It's quite a ride, I tell yer, bumping along, and they say they feel as if they hadn't had any breakfast by the time they get there. We pay thirty cents an hour for grown

people and twenty cents for children; and they're expected to hustle and keep steady at it. We ain't got no use for loafers."

While he was speaking two men carrying guns came into view on a road at some distance from us, and I called his attention to them. "They've been huntin'" he affirmed, "but I don't believe they've had much luck. They're about forty years too late for first class sport. Why, when I was a boy, you could go down on the ma'shes and get a back-load of birds in a little while —plover and curlew and snipes and such. Oh, Lord, yes! all you had to do was to get behind a stone wall and shoot 'em. I remember, too, when you could go to the beach with a pole and line, and in half an hour, standing right on the land, catch all the cod, mackerel, and haddock you wanted. Now fish are scarce, and so are the ma'sh birds, but we ain't worrying about that if we get a good yield of cranberries."

My wanderings at length brought me to the elbow of the cape, where I concluded to try walking on the beach which fronts the Atlantic in an almost straight and unobstructed course for a score of miles. I had left the main road to go thither when I paused to speak to a weather-reddened old sailor who was in his back yard visiting with his pig. The pig was standing on its hind legs and looking out of a little window in the rough hovel that served it for shelter.

"Ain't that a nice pig?" the man observed proudly. "It's just as tame and gentle as can be. There's a boy

A relic of earlier days

from my next neighbor's who likes to get into the pen and play with the pig. He used to take it up in his lap, but it's got so darned heavy now that wont do.

"I want to show you a pretty good flock of chickens. Chick, chick, chick! come on, you chaps! I bought the eggs in the spring for Plymouth Rocks; but you see the chickens are all colors. There's Wyandottes and Rhode Island Reds and I don't know what not.

"We're havin' fine weather now; but Sunday and a Monday it blew a living gale here. That was the line storm. We always get a specially heavy one about the time the sun crosses the equator. The weather has been kind of unfavorable one way or another all the year. We never had such late spring frosts and such a long summer drought. Heavens! we were all dried up here one time. I planted beans and they stayed in the ground seven weeks before a single sprout showed. Once in a while we'd get a little make-believe of a shower that would last five or ten minutes and then go away. So the crops have had a hard time. Did you say you was going to the shore? I George! I'll hitch up and carry you."

Pretty soon he was ready and we started. "This horse," he said, "is just as good-natured and gentle as my pig is. I never use a whip. He ain't fast, but he's stiddy, and he'll go jog-jogging along same as he's goin' now all day."

Scarcely was this eulogy finished when the horse shied a little, and my companion exclaimed: "What in

blazes do you see there! He thought he saw something over in those bushes."

I called his attention to some low vines that overran the ground, whose leafage was brightened with the sparkle of many little red berries. "Those are hog cranberries," he said. "Sometimes fellers come from Boston and pick tons of 'em. I asked the fellers once, 'What d'you dew with them old things?'

"They told me they made medicine out of 'em. Well, I suppose people'll buy and take any sort of a mean-tasting stuff if it's called medicine."

At last the rutted, rambling roadway came to an end near three lighthouses standing in a group on the verge of a sand bluff that dropped in a steep slant to the sea a hundred feet below. I parted from the old sailor, and half walking, half sliding, descended the bank. Now I had old ocean before me, and my ears were filled with the mellow, thunderous roar of its great breakers pounding on the narrow beach. For the sake of the walking I kept to the damp hard margin next to the sea, though often compelled to beat a hasty retreat when a bigger wave than usual sent its foam scurrying up to my path. I had the company of many vessels sailing along the horizon, but saw not a human being, nor even a bird, except one lonely sandpiper flitting over the huge, curling breakers. Mile after mile I went onward, always with that same wild, exhilarating turmoil of the sea on my right hand, and the yellow sand bank looming on the left. As a whole the scene was

singularly desolate and monotonous, and the beach itself furnished no variety save that here and there were strewings of pebbles, a few shells and fragments of seaweed, and at rare intervals a bit of wreckage.

Finally I came to a hollow that made a break in the sand-wall, and I climbed to the upland. The sun had disappeared in a low, western cloudbank, and a gray gloom had overspread the earth. A faintly marked road, which I presently discovered, seemed to promise a safe conduct through the woods to the inhabited portion of the Cape on the west shore, and I stepped along it in haste lest in the increasing darkness I should lose my way. Night had come in earnest when I arrived at Wellfleet whose thoroughfares were brightened to some slight degree by a scattering of kerosene street lights. I found a hotel and had supper. Afterward I sat down in the office where were the landlord and one of his local friends whom he addressed familiarly as "Mac." Some mosquito bites that had been inflicted on my hands during the day were still painful, and when the landlord observed me rubbing the sore spots he divined what was the matter.

"There's mosquitoes here on the Cape the whole year round," he said, "and I do believe Wellfleet is the worst place on God's earth for 'em. I tried to do a little gardening last summer, but I couldn't. The mosquitoes drove me into the house."

"And we only had an average crop of 'em," Mac commented.

"No matter what hour of the day or night I went to my garden they were right there waiting for me," the landlord continued. "They ain't fussy about workin' overtime."

"They have two gangs," Mac affirmed; "or perhaps there's three and they work in eight hour shifts."

"I thought they didn't sing as much as usual this year," the landlord said. "They'd get right onto you and if they found you a little bit tough they'd go off and set down in front of you and whet their bills and then come to jab again."

"I've been to some of our low meadows where they'd almost carry you off," Mac said. "Seems to me one of those meadows would make a good penetentiary. Just tie your criminal there and let 'em punish him."

"He'd go crazy and they'd kill him in a little while," the landlord declared. "Up in the Maine woods I've found 'em pretty thick along the trout brooks, but if you built a smudge they wouldn't bother you. Here, though, they are on to all those dodges. They are a useless pest and ain't even good for fertilizer. I know a feller who said he killed a lot and put 'em in the rows where he was plantin', but it didn't make things grow a bit better."

The next morning was dull and rainy, and though the hotel cook was very sure at breakfast time that the rain was "going to dry off" at once, the weather continued dubious until late in the afternoon. Then the mists lifted a little and I went for a ramble about the

Earning his living

town. It is a very tidy village, just as are all the other Cape Cod villages. Indeed, the snugness of the Cape homes is phenomenal; for though the houses are usually small they rarely fail to be in good repair, well-painted and neat in every respect. They plainly denote a thrifty people; yet life seems to be peculiarly leisurely, and there is very little activity apparent on the roads, in the fields, or anywhere else.

A chance acquaintance of considerable experience on the Cape, in commenting on these characteristics, said: "I know an old Cape Cod sea captain who'd been going on voyages ever since he was a young man, and he begun to consider retiring. Well, his wife thought that was the best thing for him to do. So he got a little place and fixed it up and stocked it with a few hens, and when that was done he had thirty-five dollars in cash and a small nest-egg in the bank. Time passed along, and now and then he'd go to the wharf and catch what flounders he wanted, or he'd make a trip down the bay and rake a few clams, or steal a few oysters. He exchanged hens' eggs for groceries, and he raised a little something in his garden. Nothin' worked on the place but the hens. For seven years he went on in the same easy way and found then that his cash in hand was about the same as at the beginning while his bank deposit had increased twenty-eight dollars.

"That's typical of Cape Cod. The people don't care to exert themselves. There's no hurry and no worry.

They live simply and the necessaries can be had with astonishingly little effort. A man who goes out raking up clams can earn from three to six dollars a day. But he can't go when it's rainy, and he can't go when it blows hard, and other days he won't go because those are nice days to loaf. Offer him a job on shore at two dollars a day and he'll tell you to go fly up your flue. Such wages look so small to him he feels insulted.

"The water has been the Cape's chief dependence for a living in the past, and I don't know but it always will be. We can't have manufactories because the people won't work, and we can't prosper at farming because the soil is too poor.

"One reason for the absence of serious poverty is that money don't slip away so easily as it does in most regions. The inhabitants are safe-guarded by the fact that there are no places of amusement, and a man has very few chances to spend his earnings foolishly. But in the days when every town along here had its fishing fleet the sailors were a class who, as soon as they reached port, were in a hurry to get rid of all their cash. They wouldn't ship again till it was gone. That's because they was afraid they might be drowned next voyage and so lose any money they'd saved and get no benefit from it.

"You may notice that the Cape folks are great hands for telling yarns; and it's a curious fact that when a voyager comes home and tells of the wonderful things he's seen and heard and done, his listeners begin to

think after a while that the experiences were their own, and they tell them as such. But they are a well posted people. You see, after supper, they haven't much of anything to do only to sit down and read the paper, and so they pick up at least a smattering knowledge of most everything. They are a very honest people, too, and always do as they promise, though, I must say they make the closest trades of any set I ever knew."

The chief industry of Wellfleet seemed to be the getting of quahaugs—a deep water clam. "When I first visited this region about three months ago," one of the transients at my hotel said, "some men in the hotel office got to speaking of quahaugs. The word was new to me, and it struck my ears very funny. 'What kind of a hog was that?' I asked—'a cow hog?'

"'No, no!' they says, 'a quahaug,' and went on talking.

"I didn't want to show my ignorance, so I kept still; but pretty soon I drew one of the fellows outside and asked him to explain. 'I've never heard of any such hog,' I says. 'Now what is it?'

"And he stooped down and picked up a shell that lay by the piazza, and he says, 'There's a quahaug shell;' and it was nothing but a clam shell. I've eaten lots of those clams in Boston; and, just think! they claim some of 'em are a hundred years old! Probably those are the tough bitter yellow ones you find in your chowder sometimes."

After leaving Wellfleet my next stop was at a village

where, late one afternoon, I found shelter in the home of a fisherman. While we were eating supper that evening we fell to discussing the weather, and the fisherman said: "We have it pretty rough here in winter. The wind does blow like fury and chills you to the bone; and yet the thermometer seldom gets down to zero. I s'pose it's the dampness that makes the cold so penetrating. If we had it as cold here as they do up in New Hampshire we couldn't live on the Cape at all."

"Everybody's glad to see spring come," Mrs. Fisherman affirmed. "That's a great time here for shipping Mayflowers. Some families will go all hands and spend the whole day picking the arbutus under the pines. At night they bunch up what they've gathered, put damp moss or cotton round the stems, and in the morning send it on the train. Herbert Rogers earnt enough last spring that way to buy him a suit of clothes."

When we left the supper table the fisherman lit his pipe and sat down for a comfortable smoke. "Don't you think it makes a man old to smoke?" Mrs. Fisherman asked me. "I tell Charlie he'd be ten years younger if he didn't smoke."

"Cap'n Grozier ain't a smoker," her husband commented, "and he don't look very young."

"Why Charlie!" Mrs. Fisherman exclaimed, "he's eighty-five. You couldn't expect *him* to look young."

"I do' know but you'd like to hear about a little

A glimpse of Provincetown

mix-up I had a while ago with a shark," Mr. Fisherman remarked.

"Oh, for pity's sake, Charlie, don't tell that!" his wife interrupted.

But he went on in spite of her protest, and said: "I caught one that would weigh two hundred pounds in my net," he said, "and when I'd got him up part way over the edge of my boat he nipped me just above the knee by the slack of my pants. I felt his teeth graze my leg. I gorry! if he'd been a very little nigher he'd have got me! Well, I reached for my sheath-knife and cut off his head. Then I tried to open his mouth, but his teeth were clinched and I couldn't. So I walked around in the boat tending to my work with that head clinging to my pants. 'Twa'n't comfortable, and finally, in order to get free, I cut off the piece of cloth that was in the shark's mouth."

"I think it would be more interesting if you'd tell about the big school of blackfish that was caught here," Mrs. Fisherman suggested.

"What sort of fish are those?" I inquired.

"They're something like small whales," the fisherman responded, "and I've seen 'em that'd weigh a ton. They're no good to eat, but we cut off the fat and boil it in great big kittles by the shore for the oil. We used to get 'em every year, but now only once in a long time. The biggest capture we ever made numbered fourteen hundred and five. They go just like a flock of sheep, and all you have to do is to get behind 'em with your

boats and drive 'em up on shore and lance 'em. When it was known that this school of blackfish was in the bay every boat in town went out to drive 'em. The minister was there with the rest of us, and he give a little girl a Bible afterward for tellin' him about the blackfish in time so he could go. We all hollered and pounded the sides of the boats and made as much noise as we could. Everybody but the minister was swearing and ripping out the toughest words they knew. You'd thought they'd been ashamed to use such language before him, but he was so excited he didn't notice it. Besides, he was making such a racket himself that he had no chance to hear the rest. Well, he had a good strong voice and was a great hollerer anyway. He was shouting: 'Praise the Lord! *Bless* the Lord for so great a gift to this little place.'

"In two hours the fish was all run up on the shore and killed, and when the time come to divide profits there was fifty dollars for every man who had a hand in the job, and that was most all the men in town."

After a pause the fisherman mentioned that he used to go "wracking." One wreck he worked on was the *Jason* laden with brown sugar. The cargo was still in good condition, and the wreckers were paid five dollars a day for their labor in getting it out. "When I begun on the job," the fisherman said, "I took my dinner in a three pint pail; but I noticed that every one else carried a great big bucket, and that bucket didn't go home empty either. So the second day I carried my dinner

in a pail that would hold twenty quarts, and as I was goin' on board the boss said, 'What you got in that pail, Charlie?'

"'My dinner,' I says.

"'Your appetite increases,' he says—'what for—sugar?'

"'Yes,' says I.

"'Well, it's all right,' says he, 'only don't bring a barrel tomorrow.'

"Every night I carried home a pailful, and by the time the work was done I had half a hogshead of that sugar."

A neighbor happened in just as this story came to an end. He was an elderly man, and after he had sat and talked for a while he fell asleep. The fisherman likewise napped off, and a stentorian snoring sounded from the adjoining sitting-room whither Mrs. Fisherman had gone and settled down in a rocking-chair.

It was not late, but I thought the indications were that bedtime had arrived, and I retired. During the night the wind rose, and I learned at the breakfast table that because it was a landward breeze the fisherman had got up at four o'clock to go to the shore and pick up the driftwood it brought in.

My journey on the Cape ended at Provincetown where the tip of the peninsula hooks around like the clutch of a hand. The town snugs along the inner shore in a thin line of marvellously narrow and crooked streets; and behind it are sandhills and marshes and stunted

forest, and then a waste of dunes that rise in vast barren billows and sweep away in sublime dreariness to the Atlantic. Neither here nor anywhere else did the Cape impress me as being strikingly beautiful, but it has an interesting individuality, and certainly its inhabitants are most picturesquely original.

Notes.—The main road the entire length of the Cape is state macadam. Quaint old Provincetown has the most attractions in and around it of any of the Cape towns, but interest is not lacking wherever one wanders. While in this corner of the state the traveller should visit Plymouth. The *Mayflower* cast anchor off shore here December 21st, 1620, and you can see the identical rock on which the Pilgrims set foot when the first boat load of them came to land. The town has a notable historical museum, and many ancient houses, and every sojourner will wish to see the quaint old cemetery on Burial Hill.

XI

NANTUCKET DAYS

NANTUCKET has the reputation of being an island of enchantment—not that it has any special scenic charm, but it is a fragment of New England comparatively little affected by the changing customs and fashions of the mainland, and with a quaintness and flavor of the past in its life and homes that are all its own. For the most part it is a windswept moor diversified with lagoons and ponds. Nowhere does it rise to any striking height, and the trees, except in the villages, are few and stunted.

The first settlers established themselves on the island in 1661. Thirty years later they began to send out vessels after whales, and for a long time Nantucket led the world in this industry. Its whaleships in their cruises visited all the waters of the globe. They wandered far from the lanes of commerce, and their captains discovered no less than thirty of the islands of the Pacific. One Nantucket whaleship was lost on the coast of the Fiji Islands, and all the crew, with a single exception, were murdered and probably eaten. At one time Nantucket had nearly fourscore whaling vessels, and voyages after oil continued to absorb most of its energy until a cheaper lighting fluid was found in petroleum.

Ten years later, in 1868, the last outward-bound whaler crossed its bar.

When the steamer on which one journeys to the island from the mainland has touched at Martha's Vineyard and has again turned its prow seaward you can see nothing ahead but the broad blue level of the ocean, and some time passes before Nantucket's low mass lifts above the horizon. As soon as you arrive in port you observe among the medley of buildings on the wharves many ancient fish-houses, and there see little fishing vessels and power boats, dories, and pleasure craft on the waters all around. Other boats large and small are hauled out on the shore, laid up or being repaired. The town huddles about the wharves on land that terraces steeply upward, and as you look toward it from the harbor you see its numerous roofs and chimneys amid the green foliage of the trees, and the dominating tower of the old Unitarian Church with its gilt-domed cupola.

A little stretch of Main Street in the heart of the town is bordered by small stores and other commercial or public buildings. It is arched with elms, and on the outer edge of the sidewalks are occasional settees. Here was serenity and protection from boisterous winds and burning sunshine, and people seemed very ready to take full advantage of the inducements offered for loitering. The paving is of cobblestones, and a number of the other streets and lanes are similarly paved, while on the outskirts there are rutted roads in the natural

sandy earth. Nearly all the streets are both narrow and crooked, and some of the byways and footpath alleys are quite surprising in their picturesque uncertainty.

The houses are mostly wooden with sides and roofs of shingles, and many of them, built by the old sea captains, are of generous size, two or three stories high. Paint is used sparingly, and when you view the place from the hills in the rear it appears strangely gray. Yet the houses are well-cared-for, and it is evident that the people are prosperous and live in comfort. Possibly this is because their isolation offers comparatively few opportunities for spending. Fashion and society are not so urgently enticing as on the mainland, and wealth does not set a pace which those with more circumscribed incomes feel impelled to imitate. The majority of the houses are evidently old and they have small-paned windows and the great chimneys of fireplace days. They are set close along the streets, and have a habit of thrusting a porch out on the sidewalk to which steps lead down from the front door in either direction. The town is very compact, yet there is space about its homes for bits of lawn, hedges, vegetable gardens, and an abundance of gay flowers.

The present population of the island is less than three thousand. It had ten thousand in the heyday of its prosperity. When whaling was abandoned a large portion of the younger inhabitants migrated to other localities and real estate depreciated so that houses were

frequently sold for from one to two hundred dollars. At length, however, the island began to develop as a summer resort, and its prosperity was to some degree restored. "But it's not what it used be," one of the elders affirmed to me. "The people have backslid from the old habits of thrifty industry. Lots of 'em will do anything to get shet of hard work. In summer they fetch out their teams and set all day on their behinds in front of the post office looking for a chance to drive some one around. One day a man may make twenty-five cents, and another day two or three dollars, and the next day he may not take in a blame cent. In winter they live off each other, and in their spare time gather at their loafing places to spin yarns."

I had the good fortune to lodge in one of the fine old mansions. It has much panelled woodwork inside and large low-ceiled rooms with the heavy timbers of the framework showing here and there. On the first evening of my sojourn I found my landlord and his wife at liberty and I inquired about the use of a platform with a railing round it which was perched on the peak of a neighboring roof.

"That's what we call a lookout or walk," the landlord said. "Nearly all the old-fashioned houses had 'em when I was a boy fifty years ago. Our harbor here was a busy place, and people would often slip up to their lookout with a spyglass to see what was going on down on the water. They might go up there for other reasons, too. Suppose a man had a row with his wife—

A Nantucket harbor nook

one of 'em would very likely go to the roof platform to get a little solitude.

"We had a town crier here by the name of Billy Clark from way back to the time of the Civil War until he died a few years ago. He was drafted as a young feller to go as a soldier, and for a while he was a frightened boy, but he was a little soft you know, and the officials saw he wasn't fit for the army. They gave him a furlough for ninety-nine years and twelve months. Lawyer Macy was his guardian. During the war Billy sold *Boston Heralds*. He was honest as the day was long and he was so anxious to pay for his papers that he kept sending on money to the publishers as fast as he got it. By and by they wrote to him that he had overpaid 'em. That didn't do no good, and they wrote to his guardian, who spoke to him, and said, 'Billy, don't send no more money.'

"'Mr. Macy,' Billy said, 'I wish you'd mind your own business. I'll send all the money I want to.'

"He used to go through the streets crying out whatever any one wanted to advertise. He had a good voice for that originally, but in his later years his voice all broke up so we couldn't hardly understand him. Every time his birthday came around somebody in town would make him a birthday cake. Oh, we certainly miss Billy. In the whaling days he spent a lot of time in the tower of the old church watching for returning vessels. He had good eyes. Yes, I swanny! Billy could see farther than you and I put together. When he sighted a whaler

comin' and made out what ship she was he'd blow a horn and come down and go to carry the news to the captain's house. He'd tell Nancy, the captain's wife—Nancy was a great name for women here—and she'd give him fifty cents or so. Then she'd go up through the scuttle in the roof to the lookout with her spy-glass."

"But she wouldn't stay long," the landlady declared. "She'd soon come down and set to work to bake gingerbread so as to have some nice and fresh for the boys on the ship and give 'em a treat. As soon as the vessel come in over the bar with her load of oil and—"

"Delia, keep quiet a minute, will you," the landlord interrupted. "You and I can't talk to this gentleman at the same time, and I want to explain something. I want to tell about this whaling business. The ships used to be built and fitted out here for voyages that were expected to last 'bout four years. The wives who were left behind led a lonely life, and you can imagine they weren't very cheerful when their husbands' vessels left the harbor.

"I remember, one night when I was nine years old, my mother came in the room where my brother and I were asleep and woke us up and told us she'd just got word from the owners of my father's vessel that the ship was lost and he was dead. I never saw him long enough hardly to know him. Often he wouldn't be at home more'n two months between voyages. The ship would start as soon as it could unload and get fitted

out. If a captain had good luck he'd retire by the time he was fifty worth fifteen or twenty thousand dollars. That was considered wealth in the old days. Of course, some voyages weren't profitable. There was one captain come home with only five hundred barrels of oil after being gone fifty-two months. The owners lost forty thousand dollars on the voyage, and they sold the ship. She was a nice little bark, and the captain bought a quarter interest in her and started out again. He came back in thirty-four months just as the Civil War ended with over three thousand barrels of oil, and he got two dollars and twenty cents a gallon. His share of the profits was sixty-five thousand dollars."

"Do you hear that bell ringing?" the landlady asked. "That's the curfew. It's a warning for everybody to get off the streets and that all lights should be put out and the people go to bed; but no one pays any attention to it. We have a rising bell, too. That rings at seven in the morning, and there's a twelve o'clock bell at noon."

"Two watchmen used to go on duty at the old church after the curfew rang," the landlord said. "It was a cold place up in the tower in winter, but they were rigged up with heavy boots and thick clothes, and only one man was in the tower at a time while the other was in a room below where there was a stove. They changed every hour. We thought a good deal of that tower watch. It served more for a fire alarm than anything else. If the watchmen saw a fire they'd go through the

streets, by gorry! blowing horns and hollering to beat the band."

The landlady had risen and taken a sprig of English ivy from a vase on the table. She handed it to me with the remark: "Quite a little of that grows in our garden. It's descended from some that a neighbor on a whaling voyage brought from the tomb of Napoleon on St. Helena. We have a great many pretty flowers in our town gardens, and out on the moors are all kinds of wildflowers that you can think of. Lots of Scotch heather used to grow on the moorland, but people would go to get it and pull it up roots and all. Very little is left now. Only two or three persons know where that little is, and they won't tell."

"My friend," the landlord said, "listen to me if you please for a moment. Flowers are all very well, but, by gracious! the moors are good for something else. Huckleberries, blackberries, and blueberries grow on 'em. Us old-time Nantucketers would let them berries rot on the vines, but we've got a colony of Cape de Verde negroes here, and they go out in whole families after the berries and bring 'em to the town to sell. The children pick the same as the grown-ups. Why, heavens and earth! those kids are 'bout ten years old when they are born, and all ready to go right to work. The negroes are poor and live in little shacks of homes often, but they dress better'n the whites do. They spend everything they earn on clothes, and you'll see 'em wearin' patent leather shoes and pink stockings and yellow trousers.

"The island is very quiet at present. We don't get many summer people here until after the Fourth of July. You take these vacation visitors lookin' for a lodging-place—they don't want this and they don't want that. We have to deal with a good many blame cheap people, and it's something fierce the way they talk to you. Yes, sir, you put that in your pipe and smoke it. They come into our house and tell us how much they admire old-fashioned homes and furnishings, and they look at one thing and another and exclaim, 'Oh, isn't this elegant!—lovely, lovely!' Lastly they say, 'Now let's see what kind of beds you've got;' and they'll punch their fists into 'em to see whether they've got the latest springs. If you was to show 'em a corded bed they'd drop dead. A person who's got health and works hard enough to be dog-tired can sleep on the floor, or out in the woods with his back against a tree, and sleep well, but the people who summer on this island must have spring beds, and they expect board at the same price as twenty years ago. Our own Massachusetts people put up the worst kick of any on God's earth. They are kickers from way back. They want everything old, and they also want all the modern improvements, and I don't know how in time you're goin' to manage that.

"Delia, where's the almanac? I want to see how the tide is. Say, look here, my friend, I'm going over in my dory tomorrow to a shack I've got on the other side of the harbor. Why don't you come along with

me? That's a good place to go in swimming. You can't drown there. The water's too darn shoal. At some of the bathing places there's bold water where you're likely to get out over your head before you know it, and there's such a surf it's dangerous for swimmers who are not expert. One mistake people make is staying in too long. Some will be in that chilly water for half a day. You got to use a little horse sense 'bout that as well as other things.

"There are no automobiles on the island. The public is against 'em. One man got one, but we wouldn't stand for it, and he had to get rid of it. I'm goin' to tell you just how we feel in this town. A great many of us have money invested in horses and carriages and do quite a business in hauling goods and going around with pleasure parties. The whole shooting match of such fellers is against anything that will interfere with their profits. Besides, our streets are very narrow. A man with an auto wants to go like time, and there'd surely be accidents. We'll have flying-machines here before we have automobiles."

On the borders of the harbor was a row of fishermen's huts set on posts to safeguard them from the encroaching of the high tides, and there I one day stopped to chat with a man who greeted me from a hut door. I looked in and saw that the walls and ceiling were plentifully adorned with fishing implements. A hammock made out of an old net extended the full length of the room. Outside were shells and fish-heads, strewings

of seaweed, pieces of wrecks, boats battered and abandoned, and others new and trim on the oozy flats that a receding tide had left bare.

"It's the fishing industry more than anything else that supports Nantucket," the man said. "Just now quahauging is the great thing. The whole bottom in the harbor and for miles and miles outside is covered with quahaugs. In the spring I go over to the ditch that connects Long Pond with the ocean and ketch herring on their way up to the pond to spawn. Evening is the time for 'em, especially on stormy nights. The more storms the better. They stop after a few hours, and long 'bout 'leven o'clock the eels start to run out. We spear a good many eels in the holes on the ma'sh and in the cricks that make up around there. Sometimes we ketch 'em almost as fast as we can jog. We fellers around here call it joggin'. They're all sizes from a shoestring up. The biggest one I ever got weighed nine pounds. I've seen twenty-five men out here on the harbor eeling in winter. We jog for the eels through holes cut in the ice. There's more or less fishing, clamming, and one thing or another all winter.

"Once in a while the harbor is frozen so you can go anywhere on it, but the tide runs very strong here, and when it makes out it generally clears some places so the steamer that makes trips between Nantucket and the mainland can work her way in and out. There are times though when the field ice blows into the harbor

and the steamer may have to quit running for several days. I guess the longest time was three weeks. Then supplies of kerosene and butter and some other things may run short, but people know they are liable to be cut off, and they lay in a stock of what they need. It ain't so awful cold here. The ocean warms the air, and it's very seldom that the thermometer gets below zero."

In my wanderings about the town I went up Joy Street and was interested to find that this cheerfully named thoroughfare led to the entrance to the cemetery. Some signs apprised me that it also led to the Poet's Corner, and when I came to a dooryard with its picket fence adorned with numerous rhymed placards I stopped to investigate. Similar signs were tacked to the house and to a little shop that had half a dozen nautical weathervanes on its peak. In the yard was a decripit "one-hoss shay" and other antique vehicles and curiosities, some genuine and some fake, and two rooms in the house served as a sort of museum and salesplace for souvenirs, peanuts, and root beer. The signs were printed with a rubber type outfit and included not only poetry but jokes, sells, and conundrums. They were such as these:

Now, my friends, listen to me,
There's no use now in talking
This is the place for you to see
When you go out a walking.

A cobble-paved lane

B GOOD LIKE I AND NEVER LIE

Receipt for Coot Stew

Skin the coot, throw away all but the skin, nail skin to a board, let stay nailed 48 hours, then eat the board.

God made the world and rested,
God made man and rested,
Then God made woman,
And since then neither
God nor man has rested.

What is it?

Luke had it before,
Paul had it behind,
All girls have it once,
Boys cannot have it,
Old Mrs. Mulligan had it twice in succession,
Dr. Lowell had it before and after and had
it twice as bad behind as before.

Answer: the letter L.

The poet had died not long previous after living all alone in the house for nineteen years. A picture of him on a souvenir postcard showed a burly man with side-whiskers, an enormous broadbrimmed hat, and a sign hung on his vest informing you that "This is me." He looked like a pirate.

From a pamphlet autobiography written the year he died I learned that he was born at Nantucket in 1833 and left school when he was fourteen. During the next forty-four years, most of which time he was off the island, he changed his employment fifty-one times. Among other things he worked on farms, tried blacksmithing, was a night policeman in Providence, drove a New York City omnibus on Broadway, had a washing-fluid store in Boston, was a clerk in a lawyer's office, and peddled through the rustic regions with a tin-cart. In most of the larger places where he sojourned, he joined the fire department. He had the dropsy, the smallpox, and yellow fever. His experiences included service in the army through most of the Civil War, and twice he was captured by the "Rebs" while doing duty as a spy. When he at last returned to Nantucket to make it his permanent home he set about earning a living by going around from house to house with a basket selling peanuts at five cents a bag. He prospered and presently "opened up Poet's Corner for the entertainment of summer visitors." His poetic efforts seem to have been limited to manufacturing supposedly humorous jingles of a few lines each. In one of the final sentences of his reminiscences he says, "I am now seventy-eight years old, and I have never drank a drop of tea or coffee, and I have never uttered an oath."

Not far from the home of the poet, on one of the sandhills back of the town whence you can overlook the moors sweeping away across the island with their

lowly shrubs and coarse grasses and stunted trees, is an old windmill. It was built in 1746 and was used till 1892. Now it is taken care of as a relic of the past, and a keeper is there in summer to tell its story and explain to visitors its rude mechanism. I had been informed that visitors as they gazed at its weather-beaten shingled sides were apt to utter some such exclamation as: "Why, those shingle must have been on there over a hundred years! I'd give a dollar if I could carry away one of 'em as a souvenir."

"Well," the keeper would say, "I guess you can have one if you want to pay a dollar for it."

So the visitor would go off with the shingle, but it probably hadn't been on for six months. The keeper had got some shingles from an old house that was being torn down and used them to replace those he sold.

When I called at the mill I found the caretaker seated just inside of the door smoking his pipe. He was a stoutish vigorous man, who though no longer young had a face which retained something of its youthful smoothness and hair that had not yet lost its original color. He wanted me to guess his age, and when I suggested sixty-five he responded: "Well, sir, I'm eighty, and I feel now as if I'd live to be one hundred and eighty. The other day a man and his wife was here to see the mill. She was quite a talker, and she remarked that she hoped I'd live to be as old as her husband. He was grayer'n a rat, and I said, 'By the way, how old is he?'

" 'He's sixty,' she answered.

"People wouldn't die so young if they lived mo' plainer and didn't eat such rich food. They didn't have all these fancy foods and drinks in the olden-time. We got one grave down here in the cemetery of a woman who was one hundred and twelve years of age. Cap'n Grant who kept the mill before me was ninety-three when he died, and he was just as straight as any timber in the mill. But Nantucket's about as healthy a place as there is in the Union anyway. We can't help getting pure air, for we're twenty-four miles from the nearest mainland. It's like being on a ship anchored in the ocean.

"I've seen people come here just like a rail—just like a clothespin—and go away fat as pigs. I know one woman who couldn't eat or sleep at home and her doctor decided she had consumption. 'The only thing I can do,' he said, 'is to recommend you to go to some seaport place in the hope that it will prolong your life for a few months.'

"So she came to Nantucket. At that time she weighed ninety pounds, but she began to brace up and to eat and sleep and at the end of the season she weighed one hundred and twenty-three. Since then she's been here every summer. She calls Nantucket her second birthplace. Consumption wasn't what was the matter with her. It was general debility.

"I'll give you another instance. An old lady relation of mine come to Nantucket visiting. She weighed one

hundred and eighty-four pounds, but after she'd been here three weeks her weight had gone up to over two hundred, and she said, 'Let me get off this island devilish quick!'

"There used to be more children in the homes here than you find now. They numbered fourteen in our family, and they all lived to grow up and marry. Look here, I've seen twenty-four of us, husband and wives, set down at once in our house with Father and Mother.

"This old mill is about as good as it ever was, except that the long beam which slants down from the cap to the ground, and which was for shifting the sails to face the wind, is now rotten and has to stay exactly where it is. One morning last summer, as I was comin' up here I saw that the wind was just in the right corner to set the machinery going, and it was getting stronger. 'Good Lord, let her breeze!' I said.

"Well, I'll tell you what I done. I got a bushel of shelled corn and brought it to the mill. Then I put the sails on two of the arms. If I'd put 'em on all four the arms would have run away from me. I ground the corn in no time and afterward separated the wheels and let the sails keep whirling. The townspeople saw the vanes going and they said it looked like old times. That was a great day for the mill—you bet it was! There was crowds of visitors here all the time.

"When I was a boy my folks bought corn of the farmers and I lugged up to the mill many a bag on my back. Mother made corn cakes. I golly! I've eaten

lots of 'em, and they tasted good too—oh, fust rate. Also she made johnnycake and what old-fashioned people call Injun dumplings. The dumplings was pieces of meal dough flattened out and cooked on top of a stew.

"You notice the mill has two doors. That's because the sails are sometimes whirling right across one door so it can't be used. The tips of the arms come almost down to the ground. If one was to hit you good you'd never know what hurt you.

"There was four of these mills up here back of the town once. Lots mo' land was cultivated on the island then, and the farmers raised plenty of corn and rye and wheat so that the mills had all they could do in winter. The farmers grew big crops and they had thousands of sheep grazing on the moors. But the generation now is too darned lazy to go into farming, and the farms are all goin' to ruin. There ain't enough raised on most of 'em to feed a cat.

"At the time this mill was built Nantucket was a stronghold of the Quakers. They had their meeting-houses and schools, and in 1800 more than half the inhabitants were of that faith. Once when I was a boy I went to one of their meetings. Nobody said anything and I just sat there and twiddled my thumbs. Human nature couldn't stand the severity of their customs. They had no use for art, music or games, or for books of fiction, and when the society began to disown members for breaking its rules its decline was rapid. None of the Friends are left here now.

"One of the best men that ever lived on the island was Edward W. Perry. He owned a coalyard down on one of the wharves and never fenced it in. Every winter when he was buyin' coal he got forty ton extra for the poor to lug away. Once Cap'n Reno called at Edward W. Perry's office and told him he'd seen seventeen men comin' from his coalyard, each with a full bag over his shoulder. He thought the owner would want to put a stop to such wholesale stealin', but Edward W. Perry said, 'Cap'n Reno, if you hadn't gone to the post office after your mail you wouldn't have seen 'em.'

"He was rich. He didn't care. Why, he'd even have some coal dumped up on the edge of the town when he thought the weather was too cold for the boys to come down on the wharf. Well, I tell you that Edward W. Perry was a man!

"I never saw any coal burned when I was young growin' up. We used wood and peat. People would go out in the swamps and dig the heavy black peat mud, and after it dried many and many a load was hauled to town to sell to the old rich fellers. It took plenty of fuel to heat our houses with their big fireplaces. Once the island was covered with large oaks, and roots used to be often found in the peat bogs as big as a man's body.

"In the summer of 1846 when I was twelve years old we had the big fire that burned out three hundred and sixty-three buildings in this town. The fire was dis-

covered at five minutes to eleven by two men who were comin' down Main Street from courtin'. They smelt somethin' like cloth burnin', and they put their noses to the keyholes of the stores along and finally come to where the fire was in a hat and cap store. There'd been no rain for three weeks, and the town buildings was like powder. It took all the wharves and walked up Main Street and made a big hole in the place. I didn't go to it but kept runnin' out of the house to look and then runnin' in. Father was in his schooner sword-fishing thirty miles away, but he saw the light and said: 'That fire sprung from my house, I've got so many children. They must have been playing with matches or somethin'. He started for home right off.

"In those times several watchmen were on duty in the town every night, and I can remember waking up and hearing one of 'em goin' through our street and calling out, 'Twelve o'clock and all is well.' It was a part of their job to keep us boys quiet. If they found us stealin' grapes or into other mischief they'd get after us. I've had 'em chase me more'n once. They carried a hook. It had a wooden handle three feet long, and the hook was just right to ketch us round the neck or to slip round a feller's leg and trip him up. We called the watchmen hookers. Often we'd holler out to 'em, 'Hookaar! hookaar! ketch us if you can!'

"If we did get caught the watchman would take the wooden end of his hook, slap our setdowns, then give us a kick and say, 'Get out!' Ah, those good old times!"

The old windmill

The chief pleasure resort and watering place of the island is Sconset on the exposed Atlantic shore. You can go thither from the old harbor town by a queer little narrow gauge railroad. The distance is eight miles over the sober rolling moorland. When you reach Sconset you find great billowing sand dunes, and wooden hotels and summer cottages, and a cluster of humble one-story homes of islanders that are mildly picturesque in their irregular architecture and embowering of flowers and vines. A steep sandy beach fronts the gray hazy waste of the sea with its restless waves, its smoke-plumed steamers, and white-winged sailing vessels.

I visited a fish-house on the edge of the terrace that the village occupied. A man inside was cleaning fish, and another man was poking over the contents of a bucket of waste and extracting some heads and meaty skeletons. When the latter had his hands full he came out and started to descend a steep narrow stairway that led down the bank to where, on a lower level amid the sand, was a scattered settlement of shacks and small cottages. "I'm a-comin', God bless you," he called out, and I ventured to ask him who he was talking to.

"A friend of mine lives in that yellow house down there," he replied, "and I've got a lot of baby chickens under his piazza. I'm carryin' 'em somethin' to eat and it was them that I was speakin' to."

He returned after a while and paused to get his

breath at the head of the stairway. "That's a good place for my chickens this time of year, eh?" he said. "In winter I have 'em with me at my home in Nantucket. This is no place for chickens or people either in our winter storms. When you get a nor'wester here then, by gol! you know it, and there's only about a dozen families stay the year round. How the dickens they keep from freezing I don't know. You see that small house just beyond my friend's. A poet lives in that. I don't believe he's very prosperous. Two-thirds of the poets starve to death anyhow. They don't need much to eat either. A person who don't do nothin' don't have no appetite to eat nothin.'

"Seems to me I hear it thunder off in the distance, and I see the sky is gettin' overcast and the wind is blowin' up strong."

He had hardly made this remark when a fleshy elderly woman appeared on the scene. She was his wife. "There's goin' to be a tempest," she declared, and she insisted that he should come home.

"Holy smoke! what for should I go home?" he said. "Do you want to sit in my lap and have me rock you? That storm ain't comin' here. Lord, no! We won't get enough rain to wet my shirt."

But he went, and I accompanied him to his little low-roomed shell of a house near by. We reached shelter just in time to escape a spatter of rain.

"They're gettin' a good storm somewheres away from here," my host said. "Like enough it's a-pourin' on

the other side of the island. Here comes my cat. We have to treat our cats pretty well or they go off and stay in the swamps. They ketch moles and birds and little rabbits, and they raise up young ones there. Rabbits are very plenty in the swamps and scrub oaks, and they're good eating in winter. They find plenty of stuff to live on and are as fat as butter then.

"I've got a sore thumb, and I'm keepin' it tied up at present. Yesterday morning at three o'clock just as day was breaking I started out bluefishing in my dory. Well, sir, I got one more fish than I wanted. I had him in my hands when a big sturgeon jumped out of the water close by the boat. The sturgeons get as lousy as a cuckoo, and they come up that way to shake themselves. This one fell back with a splash that sent the water flying all around and pretty near drowned me. At the same time the bluefish bit my thumb. There ain't a man in the world can sharpen a saw as sharp as the teeth of a bluefish. Each tooth is just like a lance, and my thumb was bitten clear to the bone. I've seen a feller lose half his heel that way. I caught six after I got bit, and then my thumb was paining me so that I said to myself, 'I guess you'd better go ashore, you old fool;' and I went.

"That man at the fish-house is a Portugee. Me'n' him used to go pardners fishing. One July day when we was five mile off shore in our dory there come up a sudden storm. It thundered and rained and the wind raised a heavy swell. When we was down in the

trough of the waves we could only see the heavens above, and when we were on the crest we could see all of Nantucket Island. I said to my pardner: 'Old boy, we've got caught. We'll have to bid farewell to Nantucket unless we have a streak of good luck.'

"The waves would have turned our boat over like a shingle in no time if we hadn't had two hundred and some odd bluefish in it. They served as ballast, and they were the only thing that saved us.

"When I was thirteen, at the time of the Civil War, I ran away to join the navy. I was a powder monkey, and it was my job to lug bags of powder up from the magazine to the guns. After the war I went on voyages and knocked around all over the world. But at last I come back to Nantucket. I landed with just a dollar in my pocket, and an old feller with a hack took me up to my mother's home. I gave him fifty cents, and went and bought a pint of rum with the money I had left. Oh, I used to be hail fellow well met! The tougher the crowd I got into the better I liked it, and now I'm no good.

"I come back here broke. I'd seen men lookin' for work and prayin' to God not to find it. I'd seen men loafin' and lettin' their wives support 'em at the washtub. They wasn't fit to be classed as men. They ought to have been strung up or put on a desert island. I'd seen men makin' believe they was drunk so a cop would collar 'em, and when they was sentenced to three months at the state farm they was happy as a dog with

two tails, because 'twas a good place to spend the winter. I've no love or respect for that class of people. What I did was to fish and peddle what I caught on a wheelbarrow around town.

"Time went along, and for better or worse I married. I knew things couldn't be any worse. The woman was a widow with two children, and people said I was a blame fool to marry her. I'd have been a blame fool if I hadn't married her. She's a pretty good old gal, and now, thank God! I've got a home. If it wasn't for her I'd be in Davy Jones' locker.

"She's a good cook, and we have the best there is on our table as far as sea food is concerned. I'm tellin' you there's as much difference between fresh fish and those you get inland as between cheese and chalk. I bring in a fish I've caught that's hardly dead yet. 'Here you are, Ma,' I say; and she washes him up, rolls him in meal, and in a few minutes he's in the frypan. You can eat such a fish with a relish. But the sweetness is all gone out of cold storage fish. It ain't worth a cuss.

"For several summers we boarded some concreters at our house, and they bargained we should feed 'em on fish. No meat for them. So they had fish cooked in all kinds of ways, and we'd make fishballs, and we'd put cold fish in their dinner pails. I told 'em that when they got home they'd have fishbones comin' out behind their ears. I'd get clams for 'em, and a peck wouldn't be a flea bite to them fellers. 'Don't eat the shells,'

I'd say. 'I want to feed those to my hens.' They wanted somethin' good and plenty of it. They didn't want to be served the way they would be at some hotels with a little mess of this and a little mess of that—forty-nine different messes, and hardly enough in any one for you to get used to the taste of it."

About this time my host's wife came in and asked him for the key to the shop. He explained to her that he had gone into the shop not long before and left his bunch of keys on a bench, and when he came out he had shut the door, which had a spring lock on it, and he hadn't made up his mind how he was going to get it open.

She went out, and a few minutes later we followed and found she had pried back the lock with a kitchen knife. He patted her affectionately and remarked, "The next time you go to town, if you'll promise to be a good gal and not overload your stomach I'll give you five cents."

NOTE.—To go to Nantucket you can start on the short sea voyage at either New Bedford or Woods Hole. The boats stop at Martha's Vineyard, which has attractions of its own that might well lure the traveller to pause there and make its acquaintance. But Nantucket itself excels all other New England islands and coast resorts in the charm of its unspoiled quaintness, and a first visit to it is sure to be a delightful experience.

XII

ALONG SHORE IN RHODE ISLAND

NO more fascinating character is to be found among the savages of our early New England history than King Philip, at whose hands the colonists suffered so much; and when I thought of visiting Rhode Island I decided that what I most wanted to see was Mount Hope, where, long years ago, this famous Indian chief had dwelt and where he met his tragic death. I expected as soon as I got into the vicinity of the mountain to see it rising against the sky in at least moderately imposing proportions; but one is obliged to have a quite favorable position to see it at all. In fact it is nothing but a hill, and not much of a hill at that, and I wandered astray again and again on the local roadways as I searched for it one autumn morning.

The region between it and Bristol, the nearest town, two miles distant, is for the most part one of park-like fields that have fine trees along the borders, and sturdy stone-wall fences. This used to be farming country, but the better farms have been taken by city people who want a place for rural retirement in the summer, and the little farms have fallen into the hands of immigrants from Portugal. I sometimes saw men digging

potatoes or cutting corn, but the cultivated fields were few, and agriculture as a means of livelihood is almost a thing of the past.

At length the pleasant, pastoral country was left behind and I came to bleak unfenced uplands whence I could look off on the sea overhung by a pearly haze and with a dazzling pathway across its surface sunward. Here I happened on two little boys watching some grazing cows. They were sitting among the bushes and ripened October grasses and weeds in a slight hollow, where the sun shone warm and they were somewhat sheltered from the brisk, cool wind that was blowing. The cows needed only occasional attention, and the hours of their vigil that chilly day must have dragged slowly. I tried to talk with them, but with slight success, for they were shy little Portuguese whose knowledge of English was very slender.

Mount Hope was now close at hand and I soon reached its bare, rounded summit. The land was thinly-grassed pasturage, and the turf was variegated with stunted goldenrod and white and purple asters, and there were multitudes of branching thistles, some of them still in blossom, but most gone to seed and dry-stalked. In spots grew clumps of huckleberry bushes and gay-leaved patches of little sumacs and poison ivy, while now and then occurred gray outcroppings of rock and neglected lines of stone-wall that the frosts had heaved into chaotic ruin.

The hill owes its name to the Indians who called it

The seaward view from King Philip's Seat

Monthaup, a title easily Anglicized to Mount Hope. It is the highest lift of land in all the rather level country around as far as the eye can reach, and it occupies a commanding position at the end of a peninsula hemmed about by irregular inlets from the sea. The steep southern side fronting toward one of the broader waterways is broken by a rude crag of lichened quartz, and on the slope below the crag King Philip's home village had stood. The place was sheltered from the rough northwest winds, and there was a cool spring of water at the foot of the cliff. Moreover, close by the spring is a niche in the rock known as "King Philip's Seat." Possibly he used to sit there and meditate while he gazed off over the inlet to the wooded slopes of the shore beyond. Certainly the niche is in form very well suited to its traditional use, and it would be much more perfect if visitors did not have the habit of chipping off pieces to carry away for mementoes. The spot is naturally very attractive, but unfortunately it is a picnic resort that has failed, and scattered roundabout are all sorts of ramshackle buildings—big and little, broken-windowed, leaky-roofed, and dubious in general.

For a long time the savage dwellers of the region were friendly with the whites, and Philip's father, Massasoit, not only ceded them land when they wanted it, but fed them when they were starving. Philip, as he grew older, perceived the increasing power of the English with alarm. They were overrunning the whole country, and the domain of the Indians was constantly contract-

ing. So at length he determined to act, and he journeyed from tribe to tribe inciting them to unite to drive the white men back whence they came. The struggle began in 1675, and many an exposed English village was wiped out, and hundreds of the settlers' lives were sacrificed.

But the savages suffered far more than their foes, and one by one the confederate tribes abandoned Philip to his fate. His brother and most trusted followers fell in battle, and when at length his wife and only son were taken prisoners, he exclaimed: "My heart breaks! Now I am ready to die."

The child was a boy of nine, and the Puritans, who had owed so much to his grandfather, sold him as a slave to Bermuda. King Philip was forced to seek refuge in the deepest recesses of the forest, yet even in these dire straits he put to death one of his adherents who presumed to speak of making peace.

After a time he wandered back with a few followers to Mount Hope and encamped to the northwestward of the mount on a knoll in a swamp. Captain Church, the leader of the forces fighting Philip, learned of his foe's place of retreat through an Indian deserter, and at once started with a well-armed company to prevent the chief's escape and end the war. The English commander ordered his men to approach Philip's camp by night from the more accessible side as silently as possible, and when within a few rods to lie in wait till daylight. Meanwhile he posted a squad in ambush on the

other side. Morning came, and one of Philip's Indians caught a glimpse of their lurking enemies. At once he and his companions made a rush to escape. Philip, however, ran straight on two of the party in ambush—a white man and an Indian, who both attempted to shoot him. The Englishman's gun missed fire, but a bullet from his companion's musket penetrated the heart of Philip, and the warrior fell forward on his face with his gun under him in the "miery swamp."

Our pious ancestors were wont to call Philip "a damnable wretch; a hellish monster; a bloody villain;" etc., but later estimates see in him a patriot rising in righteous indignation to avenge his people for their wrongs, and to protect them from the steadily increasing encroachments of the whites. Devastation marked the path of his warfare; but he committed no act of inhumanity so dreadful as that of the whites when they burned the old men and the women and children in the wigwams of the Narragansett village that they successfully surprised, and his treatment of his English captives was decidedly more generous than that accorded to the Indians. For downright brutality the Christian English rarely allowed the heathen savages to outrival them.

Tradition has identified quite definitely the spot in the swamp where Philip fell, and I sought it out, pushing along through the delicate sprays of the green underwood and picking my way amid pools and mud brightened as if with bits of flame by the gold and scarlet of

early-fallen autumn leaves. The sunshine flickered down into the still depths, and when I looked up I caught glimpses of blue sky and drifting clouds; and I heard the breeze rising and falling, now a soft whisper amid the foliage, now a mellow roaring that thrashed the upper leafage into a wild tumult. Probably the present appearance of the swamp is much the same as it was when the brave chief met his fate; and to recall the incidents of that grim tragedy on the very ground where it occurred is an impressive experience.

At length I returned to Bristol, an old seaport, which, though it has grown and changed, still retains hints of a romantic past. Particularly interesting are the ancient resident streets near the waterside with the thickset homes snug to the sidewalk and not infrequently encroaching on it with their quaint little porches and steps. Then, too, there is in the heart of the town a broad common with graceful elms lining every border and all the criscrossing paths. Its shadowy green-turfed repose was very delightful, and here I made the acquaintance of two elderly villagers who were having a companionable chat on one of the benches under the trees. The more venerable of the two lived in a tiny cottage near by, and when he rose to go home he invited me to accompany him. I was glad of the chance to visit with him further, and we walked along together to his dwelling. He took me around to the back door from which a narrow path of irregular-edged flagging led to some latticed grape-arbors hung full of fruit;

At the edge of the water

and beyond the arbors was a little garden. The old man delivered to his wife the basket he carried with its various packages from the grocery, and the three of us sat down in the kitchen and talked about the town as it used to be.

"I'm over eighty," the man said, "and I c'n remember when Bristol was an important port. A great many well-to-do sea captains lived here who bought their own freight and went where they was a-min' to to sell it. They tended to all the business themselves. Sixteen whaleships was owned in the place and about the same number of merchant ships and a lot of brigs. Our wharves extended along shore a mile, and I've seen 'em all loaded, and a square-rigger lying at every wharf. There was ships from all over the world; and when one of them old square-riggers come in or went out with every sail set and flags flyin' it was somethin' worth lookin' at.

"Those was days when business was lively here in Bristol, and Water Street was full of people and teams all the time. On the ships hundreds of men was at work h'istin' out the oil and hemp and iron, and the sugar, coffee, and molasses and all those sort of things. On shore there was lots of coopers makin' casks for the whalemen, and blacksmiths' shops makin' harpoons and chains, and there was shoemakers makin' shoes for the sailors who was goin' on voyages to be away perhaps two or three years, and there were tailors' shops makin' clothing for 'em; and we had a big ship-

yard here, and sail lofts makin' sails, and several rope walks, some on 'em five or six hundred feet long. How the ways of workin' have changed! Why, with the machinery that's been invented, more rope can be made now in a building fifty feet square in one day than an old-fashioned rope walk could make in a month. It's the same way with other things. If you're goin' to have a new house these days the heft of it is got out by machinery; and in fact steam and electricity have a big share in about all the jobs that's done. But even if we did used to do everything by hand, nobody didn't realize they was workin' so awful hard.

"There was no railroads here, and in winter when the ice kept ships from reaching Providence they came to our wharves, and all the farmers around would turn out with their oxsleds to carry the freight by land the rest of the way. They'd get loaded up—a string on 'em the length of two squares—and all start off together about midnight, and get back the next night, each with a load to go on the vessels.

"When I was young we shipped great quantities of onions from this region. Acres and acres was grown here, and lots o' people didn't do anything else but raise that one crop. We'd bunch 'em by braiding the tops with four strands of rye straw. The bunches would have the big onions at the bottom and gradually taper off to little ones. About twenty bunches made a bushel. I've sot on a stool many a time half the night bunchin' onions, and three or four men helpin' me,

when I was in a hurry to get 'em off. You could pick 'em up and braid 'em into bunches with that air rye straw almost as fast as a hen can pick up corn. We'd load a thousand bunches on a cart to wunst and carry to the ships, and they was handled careful, I tell you. They went to Cuba and Tangier and Porto Rique and all around, and they usually brought big prices. Some farms wouldn't get through bunching and selling till March, and then it was most time to begin work on the next crop.

"One of the first things I c'n remember is the gineral muster we used to have every fall on the common. It was an all-day celebration for trainin' and exercisin' the militia; but the musters was gin up while I was a little boy. Where the band-stand now is there was a liberty pole, and we'd h'ist a flag on it muster days and Fourth of July. The flag was all white except for a gray eagle and several stars.

"The common then didn't have all these ellums on it, but just a few large buttonwoods, and along the street walks we had cherry trees. We didn't grow much fruit on our own land, for we wanted to raise the useful and substantial things. Fruit ain't nawthin'—it tastes kind o' nice, but 'taint like a good hill of potatoes. If a man wanted to set out a fruit tree he'd start an apple tree. You get a barrel of apples in your cellar and you can make apple pies and apple slump (apples cooked in a deep dish with a thick crust on top). But what's the good of these 'ere pears and such fruits? Very few

of 'em was raised, and very few grapes. If we wanted grapes we'd go off in the swamps to the east'ard and pick 'em where they grew wild, and we'd get wild pears on the hills."

"We might just as well depend on the hills and pastures now for our fruit," the old lady said, looking out of the window toward the garden. "The tormenting young ones around here come right onto our premises and pick the fruit before it is ripe and tear everything all to pieces."

"They wa'n't like that when I was young," the old man declared. "They was brought up to behave themselves."

"They ain't brought up at all now," his wife said. "They grow up wild. We had almost none of their advantages, but the more advantages children have the worse they seem to be. Oh, they act like the old scratch!"

"Yes, things have changed," the man commented. "Even the weather is different. You know when we have a ten or twelve inch snowfall people will say, 'Why, that is an old-fashioned storm!' Tain't nawthin' of the sort. We don't get any such big snows as they used to have. I've seen the snow cover our fences and stone walls so you could walk right over 'em, and all on a level, too. Why, gracious sake alive! we had to shovel out the roads, and we'd make such channels and have the snow so high on either side that a common-sized boy couldn't look out over it. Now the snows

Noon

are never so deep but that with a little plough hitched side of a two-horse sled they can break out the roads and go about their business. Mother, don't you recollect how we used to have to shovel out our roads?"

"Yes, every winter," she replied; "and until you'd finished shoveling, the milkcarts couldn't get to town."

"To show you what our storms was like," the old man remarked, "I want to tell you about a young couple that lived on the outskirts of the village. They woke up one time after havin' what they thought had been their usual night's rest; but the room was still dark as a pocket, and so they went to sleep again. When they woke up the second time there was no more sign of daylight than before, and the man says, ' 'Pears to me this is the longest night that ever I see.'

" 'Well, I think so, too,' she says.

" 'I'm goin' to get up,' says he; and they both got up and went to the kitchen on the other side of the house and found the sun shining in from the west. It was way along in the afternoon, and there had been a snowstorm the previous night that had left a drift completely covering their bedroom window.

"How would people now stand those winters? Folks ain't so well and rugged as they used to be. You take the women—there ain't half of 'em these days able to do their own housework. But, Lord-a-mercy! in old times they'd do all there was to do indoors, and a lot besides in the fields. They'd go out and hay it, and drop corn and husk, and they'd hoe and do other work

in the onions. We're more helpless in a good many ways. For instance, it used to be the habit, if you wanted to trade at a store, to buy what you wanted and pay for it and carry it home. Now, you most likely get the things charged and have 'em sent home, no matter how little you buy; and in one way or another you've got to pay for the time of the man that does the delivering, and for the horse and wagon and the horse feed and stabling, and for paper bags, boxes, and all that.

"But there are ways, too, in which we have improved. Take the matter of lights—when I was a boy karosene wa'n't known, and we had whale-oil lamps that gave about the same light as a candle. They had two little tubes with wicks in 'em that run down into the oil, but there was no chimbleys.

"Stoves are another improvement. When I was a boy we had fireplaces, and, sir! if the thermometer was ten below zero, and the wind blowin' a gale it was hard to keep warm. Sometimes we'd hang a bedquilt on the backs of chairs in front of the fire and set inside of that. Right around the hearth it would usually be good and hot, but a little farther back the water in a pitcher on the table might be freezin'; and mornings you'd very likely wake up to find a snowbank on your bed, if you slept upstairs. However, we got along somehow, and kept middlin' well and hearty, and when you went outdoors the cold didn't take hold of you as it does now. Yes, as old Squire Bullock told his son

when they were putting in a stove and doing away with a fireplace, 'Tain't healthy, but it's more comfortable.'

"People don't cook such things as they used to. Mother would hang the pots on the crane and put in beef, pork and cabbage and other vegetables, and you'd have a dinner that would do you some good, and that would stand by you so you could go out and swing an ax or a seldge-hammer. But now there are hundreds of persons who can't eat a piece of pork; or of beef, either, if it's got any fat on it."

"Father is old-fashioned," his wife said. "If he wa'n't, mebbe he'd think different."

"Those same folks that can't eat pork will eat any quantity of sweet things to sweeten 'em up," the old man continued. "But what's the good of cake and pie? They ain't nawthin' only windgalls. And this 'ere sugar stuff all colored up, and the chocolate candies —we didn't have no such stuff when I was a boy. The candy business is a big thing now. So is the ice cream business. We never had any ice cream, and people didn't even store ice for other uses; but now every one has to have a refrigerator and they'll buy a ten cent lump of ice to keep a cent's worth of milk on.

"Did you ever notice what a lot of boys smoke cigarets these days? We didn't have cigarets at all in my time; but once when I was quite young a whaleship come in—it was the ship *Bowditch*,—and some of us boys thought we'd go aboard. So we rowed out, and when we was on deck lookin' around we noticed a barrel

chuck brimmin' full o' cigars. The sailors had made 'em themselves out of wild tobacco they'd got somewhere in their voyage round Cape Horn. They smoked 'em when they wanted to, and they told us to help ourselves. Well, we took three or four apiece and smoked 'em, and when I got home I was taken sick, and didn't I heave up Jonah! Yes, I did heave up Jonah terribly. I laid right down on the floor and let fly—By Jerusalem! Then, when I was all through and cleaned up, I got the pitapats—my mother give me them. She took her slipper and says, 'Now, if you've got over the smokin' you been a-doin', I'll smoke you!' And she did, I George, sir!

"Well, in recallin' what times was long ago I often think I'd like to go back there for some things; and whether we're really much better off as a whole I don't know. We got enough to eat in them days, and we have enough to eat now. We had to work then, and we have to work now. Seems as if it amounted to pretty much the same thing."

Evening was approaching, and the room was getting dusky when I left the little cottage where I had been so agreeably entertained. I went out into the town; but it was not quite the same place it had been before, for the reminiscences to which I had listened lent it a new interest, and every scene in the older part called up visions of the past.

Before taking final leave of the vicinity I made a side trip to Newport. A little steamer took me part way,

and then I went on by trolley over gently rolling farmlands. The fields were clean and attractive, the farm homes looked symbolic of thrift, and here and there were conical stacks of hay, sometimes occurring singly, sometimes in groups, and always charming in their grace of outline, and their suggestion of a goodly store of winter food for the stock.

The world hears of Newport almost wholly as a resort of multi-millionaires who have palatial summer homes there; and one fancies that the town must be quite impressive in the beauty of its situation and in its noble thoroughfares and costly architecture. But in reality it is a rather quiet and ordinary old village with the narrow streets and quaint crowded wooden buildings characteristic of so many of the colonial towns along the New England coast. It looked as if it might sleep on endlessly in comfortable stagnation; yet in the minds of some of its residents it has a glorious future and will in time rival New York as a seaport and commercial center.

The Newport of the people of wealth and fashion is off on the outskirts, a settlement by itself, and apparently having no influence on the aspect of the old port village. Here the "big-bugs," to quote a local designation, have built their mansions on an upland that juts seaward with a long ragged frontage of cliffs. The offlook afforded is delightful and the situation conveys hints of a breezy summer coolness that makes it in its way quite ideal. Some one has said that the homes of

this community, while in themselves charming to the beholder, are like jewels without a setting—that is, the grounds about are too circumscribed to give the architecture its full effect. No doubt this is to some degree the case, yet so far as the buildings fronting on the sea were concerned, they seemed to me not crowded, but only socially near each other.

Notes.—The visitor to Rhode Island will naturally wish to see Providence, the capital of the state. Roger Williams started a settlement there in 1636 after fleeing from persecution in Massachusetts, and named the place out of gratitude for his escape. In the city are many fine examples of colonial architecture, and the suburbs offer opportunities for delightful drives.

Newport, called by the Indians Aquidneck—the Isle of Peace—was commercially more important than New York in 1770. In one of its parks can be seen that famous historical relic, the old Stone Mill, claimed to have been built by the Norsemen about the year 1000. A notable attraction of the shore is the Cliff Walk which for three miles runs along the brow of the bluffs that front the ocean. To see the magnificent palaces of the wealthy and fashionable summer colony at all completely requires a drive of ten miles. The boating, bathing, and fishing, and the motoring trips around the city are unexcelled. Newport takes especial pride in the remarkable mildness of its climate, for the summer is comparatively cool, and the average winter temperature is higher than that of Washington.

The main highways in the state are macadam, and many of the others are good gravel or dirt.

XIII

OLD PUT'S COUNTRY

ONE of the most vigorously original and interesting characters of our colonial and Revolutionary days was General Israel Putnam. For the greater part of his life he made his home at Pomfret, Connecticut; and thither I journeyed drawn by the lodestone of his fame, which the passing years have enhanced rather than diminished. I knew nothing of the place beforehand, except that on the map it looked quite remote from everywhere, and I hoped to find it a sleepy and rustic little town with a gentle flavor of the long ago still lingering in its aspect and manner of life.

I arrived one windy and chilly evening in the month of May, and climbed the long hill that led to the village. It has a truly noble site on the hilltop, where it enjoys the best of air and sweeping views in all directions. But the old-time hamlet has been inundated with summer residents from the cities, its former homes have been either wiped out or rejuvenated beyond recognition, and it was too garish and new and too manifestly artificial to give unalloyed delight. I could not find a single structure on Pomfret Hill that carried the imagination back to the past. Even the ancient wooden church had lost its robes of white and had been painted

in modern colors to conform to the wishes of the proprietor of an adjacent hotel who wanted its tints to match those of his hotel. The feature of the village that I liked best was a big boys' school. The buildings were pleasing, the situation on that high, tree-embowered hill was ideal, and the boy students enlivening the neighborhood with their coming and going, and with their sports on the playgrounds, had real charm.

There were two hotels, and I applied at one of them for lodging. A lady who seemed to be the manager regarded me suspiciously, made some inquiries about my business, and politely yet firmly turned me away with the excuse that they were doing some renovating that made it inconvenient to receive guests just then.

I trudged off to the other hotel and entered the office. At a roll-top desk in a corner sat the proprietor—a stout and florid individual who was an epitome of well-fed comfort. He was examining a bill very attentively through a magnifying glass, and I awaited his leisure. Finally he swung around and brought me into the range of his vision and I proffered my request for lodging. But he said he did not take transients. I told him how I had fared at the other hotel and asked him what I was to do. He did not know, but spoke of a boarding-house where the barn help lodged, only he believed that was full, and on the whole was inclined to recommend that I seek the next town, seven miles distant.

So I left him. I had my doubts about the excuses

Making a rug

of these hotel people, and could only conclude that the style in which I travelled was not to them satisfactorily suggestive of opulence. My chief desire now was to get off the hill and away from that modern hamlet of wealth. The sun had set, and the mirk of night was fast thickening, and I was increasingly anxious to find shelter. Presently I accosted a man I met and told him my experience. "I suppose," I said in conclusion, "that I might go and spend the night in Putnam's wolf den."

"Yes, you might," he responded; "but it wouldn't be advisable. Them rocks harbor too many rattlesnakes. So the hotels wouldn't take you in? You'd got the money to pay for your accommodation, hadn't you? And no bugs or anything of that sort? Well, I've known the proprietor of the second place you applied at ever since he was a boy, and that man wants the earth with a barbed wire fence round it. But I'll tell you where you can get kept. You go right on along this road to the third house and try there. You'll find quite a family—the man has married a second time and got some young children—kind of a rowen crop—but he'll make room for you."

My chance acquaintance was right, and the shelter for which I asked was granted. The "rowen crop" had already gone to bed, but I sat and talked for a while with my host. "Thirty-five or forty years ago," he said, "this was strictly a farming town, and up on the hill was an old-fashioned church and a village of

white or red farmhouses. Some of those old houses are there yet; but they're a good deal like the Irishman's shirt—he patched it till you couldn't see the original cloth. Yes, the new owners have remodelled 'em, and built on porté-cochers and the devil knows what so't now they don't look anything like the houses they used to be.

"A few of us outside of the village still farm. Our worst trouble is in finding help. Seems as if everybody had an idea of getting a living some other way than by working for it. Wages are going up and the workers are becoming more independent all the time. I hire help a good deal, and yet I consider myself a laboring man; for I work hard all day and nearly every day. I think I can see both sides, and the feature of the case to my mind is this—the relative positions of employer and employed are much the same as that of a man to his horses and oxen. If our beasts of burden knew their strength we couldn't control 'em. Well, the working-people are beginning to find out their power, and often they ain't wisely led and just smash things. It's created sort of an unnatural condition."

While we were talking he had a call at the telephone and in responding to it I noticed that he inquired rather solicitously after some one's health. When he hung up the receiver he turned to me, saying, "I was speaking with a house where there's an old lady nearly ninety. She's been quite sick, and they thought she would die. Her two daughters were a good deal flustered getting

the house ready for the funeral; but the old lady is better, and she's got up and is bossing the job herself."

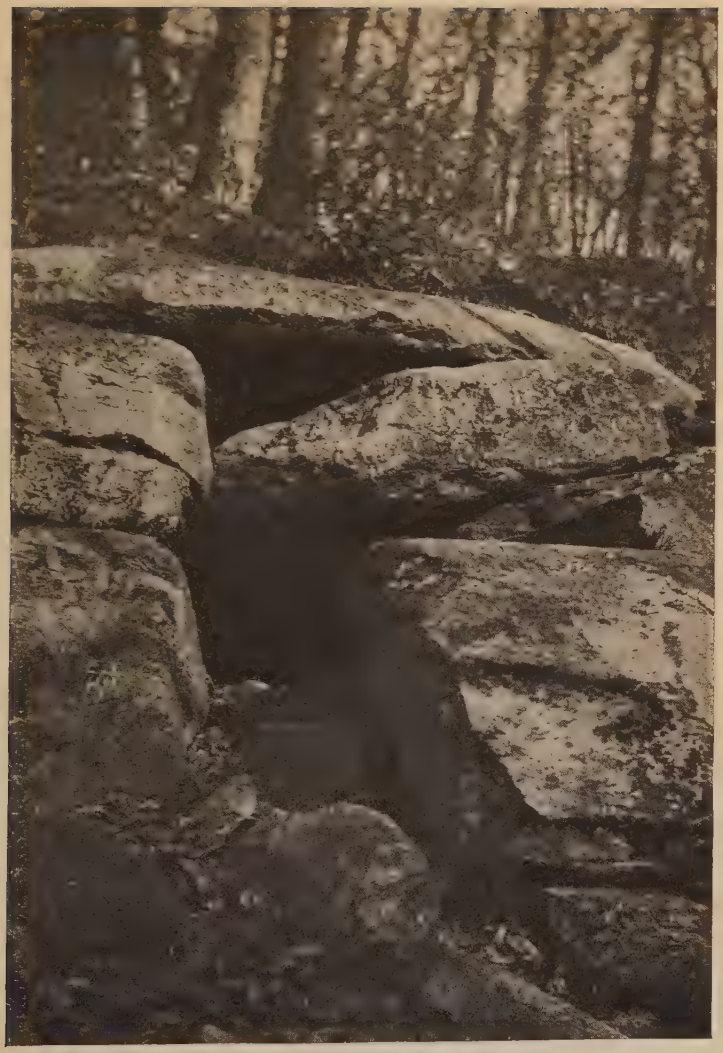
The next morning I started off to hunt up Putnam's wolf den, which was two or three miles distant. The same chilly, tempestuous wind I had encountered the day before was blowing; yet the birds sang cheerfully, and the swallows skimming low over the meadows seemed not to mind either the gale or the cold. Nor was I uncomfortable myself. The weather would have to be very sharp indeed when one could not get warm walking up hill and down dale among those billowy uplands. Stone walls were the common fencing of the region. They hemmed in the roadways and divided the fields with their gray, lichened bulwarks, and the ruddy-leaved poison ivy vines crept in and out of their crevices, and other wild shrubbery throve along their borders comparatively safe from the attacks of the thrifty farmers. They were the castles, too, of the mice and similar little creatures, though you might scarcely suspect the presence of these inhabitants, they so seldom showed themselves.

Fully two thousand people visit the den every year and the route leading from the public way off to the woodland in which it is located is a well travelled road. "The visitors are from all over the country," one of the local dwellers explained to me. "You ain't no idea how far some of 'em come. In fact, those from a distance are apt to take more interest than those whose homes are close by. Now, my grandfather lived eighty-four years

within a mile of the wolf den, and part of the time he owned the land it was on; but he didn't care about it and never went to see it."

The pilgrims to the wolf den usually go in teams, and they can drive to within a few rods of it, and from the hitching-place a multitude of feet have made a plainly-marked trail that took me right to the spot. There I stood before a black opening that went back into a shattered ledge, and the great blocks of granite were cleft so regularly and lay so well-arranged to form the cavern that you would almost suspect it was the work of some gigantic aboriginal builder.

The opening was about two feet wide, and high enough to allow a man to crawl in on his hands and knees; but the space between roof and floor became more cramped farther in. The brown last year's leaves lay strewn about outside, and a strawberry plant was in bloom and a tuft of grass grew in gentle security at the very mouth of the savage cavity. It was on a rough, steep hillside thinly wooded with oaks that sprang up from the rock-strewn earth. Boughs and bushes were everywhere feathered with new leafage which was tremulous with the wind soughing through the forest. Except for the music of this sylvan harp there was almost complete silence, though I recall a woodpecker on one of the tree-trunks making a zigzag study of the bark and tapping here and there in spots that seemed promising. No doubt nature was just as quiet in that far-gone time when the crowd of men and



The wolf den

boys gathered here to destroy the wolf that had been driven into its lair.

Putnam had come to Pomfret in 1738 at the age of twenty-two, shortly after his marriage. He did not live on Pomfret Hill where I had been the evening previous, but five miles south in the village of Brooklyn. "In those days of comparative simplicity," one of his biographers says, writing in 1846, "few of the costly luxuries of the present day were known. The hard and burdensome yoke of European fashion, which grinds so many of us into the dust was not laid on the colonies."

It is no wonder then that a man of Putnam's industry and energy should in a few years find himself possessed of a comfortable and substantial home, his clearings well fenced and cultivated, and his pastures handsomely stocked. Like many of his neighbors he had a flock of sheep, and in common with them he suffered year after year from the ravages of a certain she-wolf. They recognized their enemy by her footprints; for she had at some time been caught in a trap and escaped by leaving the toes of one foot behind. When too closely pursued to carry on her depredations any longer with safety she would abandon the vicinity altogether for the season. But she invariably returned the ensuing winter, and at last Putnam entered into an agreement with five of his neighbors to watch for and follow the wolf until she was killed.

They began the pursuit immediately after a light fall

of snow at the opening of the winter. Over the hills, through forest and swamp they went to the banks of a stream six miles distant. There the wolf turned and made back directly to Pomfret and entered the now famous den in the rocks. Here a guard was set, and a crowd of men and boys assembled from the region around with dogs and guns, straw and sulphur. A fire was made in the mouth of the cave, but neither smoke nor fumes had any effect—probably because they escaped in the crevices before they penetrated to the innermost recess where the wolf was.

The hours passed with various fruitless efforts until it was nearly midnight, and then Putnam proposed to take a torch and go into the cavern to investigate. His neighbors remonstrated in vain. After fastening a rope to one of his legs and ordering those outside to pull him forth when he signalled by kicking, he stripped off his coat and vest and, armed only with a torch, crawled in at the opening. When he had advanced about twenty feet he saw the glaring eyeballs of the wolf at the farther end of the cavity, scarcely three yards distant. He gave a hearty kick at the rope, and his friends pulled him out in all haste, much to the detriment of his clothes and person. But he got himself into shape, took his gun and a fresh torch and again entered the cave. As soon as he was near enough to see the wolf distinctly he took aim and fired. The concussion and the smoke almost overpowered him, but the crowd outside hauled him forth into the open air

where he quickly revived. Then for a third time he entered the cave, where he found the wolf dead. So he seized her by the ears, kicked the rope, and out he was dragged with the wolf in his wake.

To see Putnam's home village I had to retrace my steps and take another road—a more travelled way than the one I had been pursuing, yet closely akin in its bordering of stone walls and in its manner of going up and over the big rolling hills. Neither for riding nor walking was it at its best just then; for the town scraper was at work on it, scooping out a deep depression on each side and heaving up a steep, arched ridge in the middle. The scraper left the surface comparatively soft, and a fortnight's travel would be needed to harden it. There were occasional farmhouses, but they were as a rule so far apart that the country had a touch of loneliness in its aspect. Once I startled a pair of fat woodchucks in a wayside mowing lot, and they scuttled off through the grass as fast as they could go. A little farther on, a chipmunk who was trotting along his own special highway, the stone wall, caught sight of me and whisked into a cranny among the stones. Then he turned about and watched me with alert-eyed intentness.

Brooklyn proved to be a tidy, mild little place on the undulating lowlands. There were fine trees lining the streets, and there was a grassy common on which stood a slender-spired wooden church built considerably more than a century ago. Putnam lived opposite the

green, and for a time he kept his house as a tavern. Some of the elms now growing on the street were planted by him, and he helped build the church and was its bell-ringer. His connection with the place throws over it a certain halo of attraction, and even without that the impression it makes is decidedly pleasing.

It is, however, suburban rather than rustic, and a hired man with whom I chatted on the outskirts explained the situation by saying, "The heft of the people have got some money. But they didn't make it themselves. It was all left to them. They mostly cultivate a little land, though their doing so ain't necessary, and they don't look to that for any profit. They wouldn't get very fat if they had to farm. Yes, they're well fixed, and it doesn't make any difference to them whether school keeps or not. They sit around, and eat, and ride out a little and take life easy generally. But if you want to see a village where the people are all rich go over to Pomfret Hill. That's a summer resort, and the folks come and go a good deal like wild geese. Some of 'em only stay a month. It's a stuck-up place. I worked there one season, and I got enough of it. They want you to work for small wages and are just as tight as if they were poor. Our wealthy people ain't throwing away any money. Some of 'em with a good big pile never pay a bill if they can help it. I know one man who's got all his property in his wife's

Schoolboys

name. Try to collect from him and he ain't worth a cent, not one."

The field in which Putnam was ploughing when the news of the battle of Lexington was brought to him was some of his outlying land two miles from Brooklyn up a hill toward Pomfret, adjoining the farm of Captain Hubbard. He and the captain were ploughing within call of each other that April day when the mounted courier hastening along and beating a drum at intervals, accosted them. Hubbard went to his home which was near by, to make ready in an orderly manner to start for the scene of action. But Putnam merely unyoked his oxen from the plough, bade one of his boys who was with him go home and tell Mrs. Putnam where he was gone, and then mounted his horse and dashed away toward Boston.

"We had that plough of Putnam's on exhibition here once," a Pomfret man told me; "and, by gosh! when I saw it I didn't blame Putnam for leaving it in the field. It wa'n't much but a crooked stick shod with iron, and I'll be darned if I'd put it in the barn if it was mine. But Putnam was clear grit. He was always ready to act. You know how he risked his life saving the burning powder magazine, and how he galloped down the stone steps to escape the British. He was just the same at home. There was one time he owned a very fine bull that was ugly as sin. All the neighbors were afraid of him; but once when Putnam was going through the pasture and the bull acted

threatening, he got mad at the creature. He caught him by the tail, twisted it around a small tree so he could hold him fast, and gave the animal a sound drubbing with an ox goad. The bull bellowed and tore up the ground, but couldn't get away till Putnam was through with him, and the experience made him a good deal more civilized for the future. That's the kind of a man Putnam was."

The house in which the general spent his last years, and in which he died, still stands. It is well up on a lofty hill between Brooklyn and Pomfret, and though it has been enlarged it continues to be a farmhouse and preserves much of its original character both inside and out.

When I was nearly back to my lodging place I stopped to speak with a man who was lounging in the wayside grass baiting his cows. Some schoolboys who happened along at about the same time addressed him familiarly as "Albert." They, however, showed no intentional rudeness, for they were very nice little fellows, and it was simply the habit of the region. The man said he had as large and fine a farm as there was in town, and he was soon telling me about his stock, his dog, his garden and all the other things in which he took pride.

"I suppose," I said presently, changing to another topic, "that your roads here are too rough and the hills too steep for automobiles."

"No," he replied, "they travel every road we've

got, and they're getting to be awful numerous, too. We country people don't like 'em very much. They've put too many good horses out of commission. Some of our horses have got used to 'em, but others has to go crosslots yet, and are liable to tear you up on top of a stone wall, if they meet one sudden. The people running the machines don't use much judgment. You notice that square corner up the road a piece. I've seen 'em comin' round there twenty miles an hour, and they couldn't see ten feet ahead.

"I own one horse that ain't afraid of 'em a particle. She wouldn't pay any attention if one was to blow up right in front of her. There never was a gentler creature. One time when I was drivin' her we got tipped over into a snowbank, and she stopped at once and stood stock still. One thill was on top of her back, and the other between her legs. We had to unhitch to get the sleigh right side up. There's nothing slow about her, if she is gentle. Once I tried following an automobile, and for three miles I kept her close behind, right in that stink, with her nose rubbing on the shoulder of the man in the automobile. When he looked around I'd say, 'Get out of the way, or I'll run over your old box!'

"He never spoke till he reached the place he was goin' to, and then he turned and said, 'You've got the darndest horse I ever see.' "

It seemed to me that this man in his encounter with the automobile showed something the same spirit that Putnam did in taming his savage bull; and if the

doughty general were alive in his prime now, I wonder what he would do about these wild modern machines that career over the Pomfret hills. But probably he would not stay in the Pomfret environment of today. His was a pioneer temperament, and he would more likely be far away on some remote frontier.

Notes.—It is a hilly region on the extreme eastern borders of the state. A few important roads are macadam. As to the others, they are good, bad, and indifferent, but amends are made for any difficulties of travel by the varied charm of the landscape. About half way to Hartford is Willimantic, the "Thread City" and the home of Nathan Hale, the Revolutionary hero.

XIV

SHAD TIME ON THE CONNECTICUT

IN colonial days shad were caught in great numbers for more than one hundred and fifty miles up the river. Now they scarcely get a third of that distance, and comparatively few of them are taken even at the best fishing-places. The season includes all of May and the first ten days of June, a most delightful portion of the year, and the employment is picturesque and mildly adventurous. It appeals to the primitive instincts in man, and though the diminishing financial returns make the fishermen grumble, the fascination of the work entices them back each year to the pursuit of the finny treasures of the stream.

To see the fishing at its best I went one June day to a village far down toward the mouth of the river. The latter portion of the journey was made in the evening on one of the large steamers that ply between Hartford and New York, and I did not reach my destination until ten o'clock. When I came forth from the brightly lighted steamer out on a pier there seemed to be nothing in the surrounding space except the unfathomable blackness of the night. But soon my eyes became accustomed to the gloom, and I could dimly discern buildings and trees and a clouded sky.

I had chatted with one of the officers on the boat about the region along shore, and he had said: "I'd be afraid to ask for lodging after dark in most of these country places. They'd be shootin' me for a chicken thief."

Fortunately this waterside village had a hotel near at hand up a short, steep hill and it had not yet closed its doors. There I found refuge.

The next morning I was out early, curious to learn the character of the place in which I had stopped. There was a little nucleus of stores and shops near the wharves, and two or three roads wandered away in different directions. The houses were tucked into all sorts of nooks and perched on every convenient slope and knoll. A short distance back from the river was an abrupt and rocky hill that was for the most part covered with woods. Trees abounded, too, in the village, and nature in general seemed luxuriant and generous.

There were farms on the outskirts, most of which had fallen into the hands of Italians who labored on them with an industry and effectiveness that the local Yankees either had not the ability or ambition to rival. They terrace the rocky slopes and raise grapes and peppers. Some of the grapevines were tied to stakes or trained to grow on wires strung to lines of posts, and others are on overhead wires and form extensive arbors.

'It's a kind of Eyetalian grapes that they raise," a village patriarch explained, "and those grapes do well

here. Oh, golly, yes! I measured one bunch that was fifteen inches long. But they got a flavor I don't like, and I let 'em alone though I naturally eat grapes by the bushel. The Eyetalians press out the juice and send it to New York to be made into wine. When these people go off to spend the day working in their fields they carry along a pitcher of wine, and some stale bread that is so tough they can hardly bite it, and at noon that wine and bread and some of their big green peppers right off the vines are their dinner. There's always macaroni in everything they cook. I don't care for that. I never was fond of angleworms. They used to raise a curious kind of beans that they cooked, stems, stalks, pods, and all. The beans were so big that one of 'em would make a mouthful. They grew good here until the white fly raised the divil with 'em. Those flies wasn't much more'n an eighth of an inch long, but there'd be half a million on a single bean vine.

"The Eyetalians do take care of the ground and there ain't no waste nowhere. Most of the land they cultivate is rocky, but it's nothing like as bad as you find on the farms seven or eight miles down the river. The country there is all ledges and only fit to pasture sheep on. Even then I guess the people have to steel point the sheep's noses so they can get the grass."

Automobiles were often passing on the village roads, and yet ox-teams were also much in evidence. Two yoke of oxen were apt to draw the loads on the rougher and steeper highways. If they stopped for any length

of time in the village while the wagon was being loaded or unloaded they would lie down and calmly chew their cuds. I was told that one man who lived a few miles back in the country was in the habit of hitching seven or eight yoke of oxen to his wagon when he was bringing lumber to the village, and it was affirmed that his motive power was economical because he drew "infernal big loads." Another item of interest was that his oxen were as "poor as Death's crows."

From the hotel piazza I could see a long stretch of the river southward, placid and slow-flowing, and bordered in places by marshes or meadows, but more often by wooded slopes. Now and then a sturdy tug ploughed its way up or down dragging a tow of coal barges, sometimes a little sloop with canvas spread was w.fted along the water highway, and numerous motor boats chug-chugged hither and thither.

From the piazza, too, I had a good view of a little stream which loitered beneath some graceful, drooping elms and joined the river just below. Its farther shore was used by the shad fishermen for a landing place, and there I visited with a number of them on the first morning of my sojourn while they were taking the wet nets from the sterns of their boats and spreading them on poles a little back from the water to dry. It required two men to a net. One stood on each side, and as they shook out sticks and rubbish caught in the meshes, and patiently untangled the snarls their tongues were busy gossiping and chaffing. An elderly man whom the

Low tide

others called "Harry" was perhaps the most communicative in response to my questions. He had a full gray beard and wore spectacles which slipped far down on his nose. When he walked he limped about with a cane, and he accounted for his lameness by saying that the knuckle on his knee was broken.

"I'm seventy-six years old," he informed me, "and the combined ages of me and my partner are one hundred and fifty-four. I guess there ain't any shad crew on the river any older. Two men is the crew for a rowboat. When they go out to fish they take along a dragnet that is from sixty to ninety rods long. The nets cost forty dollars or more apiece and usually only last one season. We have this job of cleaning and drying 'em every morning. They scrape along on the bottom, and you'd be surprised to see the stuff we bring in. There's everything from a toothpick up to a sawmill log, and there's clam shells and cinders and tin cans, and one feller got a melodeon, or pieces of it, in his net. That was after a big rain which washed away some dams on a stream that flows into the river above here. It took buildings and everything in its wake as clean as a whistle.

"We only go out fishing at night. The shad would see the net in the daytime and go round it like sheep over a fence. When we slip the net off into the water we fasten a tub with a lantern in it to the outer end, and the boat is at the other end. All night we drift with the tide. If the tide is running up we go down

below half a mile and drop our nets. If the tide is running out we start right off the dock, and during the night the current and tide together carry us nearly two miles downstream. It's time to go out just as soon as a shade of darkness strikes the water. We take along a jug of drinking water, and we carry a lunch that we eat about midnight. Sometimes the wind blows like the mischief and makes hard work for us, but on quiet nights there's not much to do only to set in the boat and chin with one another and swap lies. We have to pick up our net if we see a power boat or a steamer comin' in our direction. They have the right to the channel, and some cap'ns and pilots will go right through you, but there's others who will slow down. A power boat cut our net in two last night. It was running without lights, and if we can find out who the feller in that boat was we'll fix him. We'll make a complaint and his license will be taken away.

"Those power boats are a blame nuisance, and the fellers who run 'em are the biggest set of ignoramuses I've ever seen. They're darn fools, to speak politely without slandering 'em. Here's one of them power boats now goin' like blazes. It's got a funny-shaped prow. Ha, ha! see the shovel-nose. He's a noisy one.

"Some fishermen load their boats with rocks, and if a power boat acts mean they put out their lights and heave the rocks at it.

"On Saturdays there's as many as three hundred men goin' down in power boats to Saybrook. They'll

tell you they're goin' to fish and get clams, but really they're goin' to have a Sunday drunk. There are clerks and mill-hands and farmers from all along up the river as far north as Hartford. Others are sporting men who have big boats and make a great splurge. Sunday they go back strung along anywhere from three in the afternoon to eleven at night, and they're either makin' enough noise to scare the devil to death, or else they're very quiet. Those that are quiet have got their hides full.

"We quit fishing about four o'clock in the morning. We know it's no use after daybreak, and it ain't much use before. Me'n' my partner only got three shad last night. When we come in with our boat we go home to bed. If I git four hours sleep I'm satisfied. I used to be a sailor, and I got the habit of having a little nap in the afternoon. With the help of that nap it didn't bother me any to stay up all night. You'll find that's the way with all the old fellers who've been to sea."

"I don't feel as if I'd slept any for a week," one of the younger men observed. He was puffing with sad-eyed weariness at a cigaret. Several empty beer bottles lay in the bottom of his boat. He took them out and said: "Somebody put those in there. Supposing my wife came here and see them! There'd be trouble right away, wouldn't there, Grumpy?"

"That's bloody mean, Dan, to put bottles in your boat," Grumpy commented. "It's as much as to say you drink."

"Well," Dan resumed, "a little sloop lay down at the wharf here last night. It was loaded with clams, and some of us from the village was in it till one o'clock eatin' raw clams and drinkin' beer. We was cussed fools. I started with three bottles of beer in front of me and one in my hand, and I emptied 'em all. When I got home I didn't dare go in the house. So I lay down in the woodshed on some shavings. Early in the morning I slipped away, and I haven't been back yet. I don't know whether my wife will give me any breakfast or not. If she won't I'll go to the hotel and buy a sandwich."

I asked Grumpy how he got his nickname.

"When I was a kid," he said, "there was an old man who used to trot me on his knee and give me candy and sing songs to me. He was always makin' rhymes, and one of his rhymes that I was very fond of was this:

> "Old Grumbo Chaff lived in the wood;
> He e't all the boys and girls he could.
> Some he greased and swallowed whole,
> And he lived so long he swallowed the world.

"That's where I got my nickname. It should be Grumbo, but people call me Grump or Grumpy."

"Your boat didn't come in when the others did this morning," Harry remarked.

"No," Grumpy responded, "our net caught on a thundering big stump. We got hung up and had to

wait till the tide turned. While we were waiting I went on shore and slept in the mud under the root of a tree."

"Not all of us use drag nets," Harry said to me. "Some tie bricks on along the bottom of the net so the tide and current won't carry it along. There's one man puts in a net that way just across the river, and he's got a tent on the shore. He sits in the tent at night and rests a little and peeks out once in a while so if any steamboat or motor boat is coming he can go and pick up the net."

"Shad fishing is a hard life any way you're a min' to fix it," Grumpy declared. "You want to wear your oldest clothes because it'll spoil 'em, and you want lots of 'em because the nights are cold. However, there's money in fishing if you get a good ketch."

Every now and then the men would come across a snarl in their nets that they called a twizzle, and often a good deal of time and patience were required to pick and shake it out. "All sorts of fish make twizzles," Dan said. "Sometimes a little alewife will make one of the meanest sort."

During the morning rowboats were arriving from points up and down the river bringing shad to a neighboring dock, and each new arrival was sure to be greeted with the query, "How'd they run this time?" None of the fishermen had caught enough to brag about.

"It's like this," one man explained; "the shad go in shoals together, and if one boat has a good ketch they

all do. I call it a poor season. The boats come in with ten or twelve shad. That's about a third less than last year. We never do as well in a Democratic administration. There was a poor run of shad when Cleveland was president, same as there is now that Wilson is in. It seems like a put up job."

The men in the boats tossed the shad up into a large shallow box when they were washed, and afterward they were packed in ice to send away. While this work was going forward a villager came and wanted to buy a "good" shad.

Harry turned to me and remarked: "I ain't seen a decent shad this morning. Half of 'em have thrown their spawn, and after that they're as rank as sow pig meat. But they sell good to the greenhorns in the cities. When I go past a house where they're cookin' shad I can tell by the smell whether it's spawned. If they're cookin' eels I hold my nose till I get by. Yes, eels are pretty bad to my smeller. People say they are good eatin', but they ain't good for me. As for shad, you won't ketch no fisherman to eat even a roe shad, not unless it's salted. Give me a good buck shad every time. Say, you may laugh at me, but let me tell you how to cook a shad right. First split him open. Some take the backbone out, but that cuts off too many fine bones. Don't forgit to salt and pepper him. Then take a frying pan and cover the bottom with pork sliced thin. Lay your fish onto the pork and put more pork on top of him. You need a few spoonfuls of water

in the pan so he won't stick on. Cover the pan up and shove it in the oven. In half an hour pour on a little cream and leave the pan in the oven with the cover off. When the fish is nicely browned add more water and ten minutes later take him out and eat him, and if you don't say that's the best shad you ever e't tell me I don't know how to cook. It'll make your mouth water."

In the afternoon I sat on the hotel piazza looking off over the river. A door at the far end of the piazza gave entrance to an odorous bar-room where the fishermen and others did much guzzling and loud talking, and presently a weazened little old man came forth, stopped before me, and regarded me quizzically. "Ain't you a lawyer?" he asked.

When I told him I was not he slapped me on the shoulder and said: "I'm glad of it. There's too many of 'em. I never saw you before, and I may never see you again, but there's worse fellers than you be, I'll bet. One of our village girls married a Southern man, and they come here to visit after a year or two. We'd understood he was a poor man, but they seemed to be prosperin' and when we asked her about it she said, 'We're livin' on other folks' quarrellin' and gettin' along very well.' He was a lawyer, don't you see? There was an Irishwoman here who always used to speak of him in her brogue as a 'liar;' and she wasn't so very far wrong either, hey? That's what a lawyer is, most generally. Well, I've been in there (he pointed

with his thumb toward the bar-room), and I'm a little bit exhilarated, but that's straight what I said about the lawyers. Shake hands. Good-by."

Shortly afterward Harry joined me and sat down to visit. He was too old to have regular employment, but he did odd jobs in the village and gravitated around in the vicinity of the bar-room. While we talked he chewed, and at regular intervals he got up and hobbled with his cane to the edge of the piazza to spit.

"I've lived alone ever since my wife died seven years ago," he said. "My children have been urgin' me to come and live with them, but I don't see it that way. For instance, one of 'em lives in New Haven, and I'd as lief be in Tophet as in the city. There's too much noise and too much stink. I want to be among the trees where there's birds. I want to live as I want to live and cook to suit myself.

"The birds and the other little wild animals git very tame around my place. The sparrows—good Lord! they come right into the house. Some robins build in the grapevine at my back door. If I put my hand in their nest to feel whether there's eggs or young birds in it the old robins scold me, but I tell 'em, 'I ain't goin' to hurt you.'

"Two little birds that sing like katydids comes every year 'bout the first of July and set on the clothesline and sing to me. They're kind of a bronze color and ain't much bigger'n my thumb. I can hold out a plate with cracker crumbs on it and they'll eat off it.

Comparing fish

"I've got an educated cat that I raised from a kitten. He is maltese and white. I say, 'Chub, you rascal! you do so and so;' and he does it. If I tell him to say his prayers he'll set right up on his stern and drop his paws and his head down. When he asks for grub he sets up and makes his paws go. A woman school teacher was callin' on me one day and tellin' that animals had got no reason. We had quite an argument. Chub lay on the grass near by, and after a while I called to him and said, "Walk up and shake hands with the lady.'

"He came to her and shoved out his paw the first thing, and she said, 'I give in.'

"Once I showed Chub the hole of a ground mole in a neighbor's garden and says, 'Now you ketch that ground mole,' and he stayed there until he caught it. He didn't eat it. Moles are poison to a cat, and I don't know of any animal that'll eat 'em.

"Last night, after I got home from fishing, I hadn't been asleep long when Chub woke me up. He and another cat were in the yard makin' a great noise. I went out to see what was the matter, and there was Chub settin' up cuffin' the other cat's ears. He knocked him galley west. Then I cuffed Chub's ears and sent him in the house.

"I c'n remember things when I was a kid only four years old. It was at that age I had the whooping cough, and I had it terribly, I tell you! There was a brook near the house,—a regular trout brook, shallow

and gravelly. The suckers would foller up it to git to a still spot to lay their spawn, and I used to wade in after 'em. That spring when I was coughin' I ketched a big sucker in the brook—just grabbed him. I got wet from head to foot, but I was goin' to git that sucker, whether or no. I hugged him right up in my arms, and I can see that sucker's face now lookin' up into mine. He was a big one—oh, golly yes!—must have weighed two pound.

"But as I was comin' out of the water with him my sister ketched me, and then I certainly was in a pickle. She called me a mushrat and give me a slammin'. I don't know what become of the sucker, but I know I got the lickin', and in less'n an hour I was in that brook again. Now they won't let a child with the whooping cough git his feet wet or anything else. But I guess I was in that brook every day until finally they tied me up in the house.

"A few years ago a boy not much older'n I was then made quite a business ketchin' suckers in that brook. He'd wade in and throw 'em out. They're a lazy sort of fish anyway. I've seen him line the bank with 'em. He sold what he could, and left the rest on the bank to stink. At last the neighbors stopped him. They had to. They couldn't stand it.

"My father was what was called a master of the square and compass. He could do all joiner work, and I learned his trade. I was quick of eye and quick of hand, but up to the time I was twenty years old ninety-

six pounds was the most I'd ever weighed in my life. They used to call me the Runt; and yet later I got to be the biggest of the family. Yes, there was fourteen of us children, and I was the largest of the lot. When I was a young man I wore my hair long—just had a notion to wear it that way, but one day an older brother and another feller got me down and tied me and sheared my hair all off. My godfrey! They didn't leave it an inch long.

"That made me a little mad, and I swore I wouldn't have my hair cut again by them nor nobody else for five years. Then I slid out and went to New London, and I wasn't there but a few days when I got a chance to go to sea. I was a sailor from that time on until I was nearly forty. My longest voyage was up the Amazon after nuts, rubber, and wild animals. I kept out of reach of them animals. But I got a little monkey for myself. They had the smallest monkeys there I ever see. Mine wa'n't half the size of a cat. I caught him by boring a hole in a box just big enough for him to git his hand through and putting a lump of sugar inside. That's the way to ketch monkeys. They grab the sugar and then can't draw their hand out, but they won't never let go of it. I had my monkey with me for two or three trips. Then I sold him. It got to be too much of a nuisance waiting on him.

"After I'd been to sea five years I landed in New York, and I went into a barber shop and got sheared and shampooed. It was a great fashion then among

all sailors to wear their hair long and keep it rolled up under their caps. Mine never bothered me only once in a while when it got full of water. The barber unrolled my hair and it hung down to the small of my back. He was a wigmaker, and he told me he'd give two dollars for it and throw in a new collar and a necktie. Says I, 'Git at it, mister;' and I didn't let it grow long again.

"Twenty years ago we couldn't have set here half an hour lookin' down on the river without seein' the sturgeon leap. They'd leap clean out of the water, gosh, yes! and fall back on it—spat! But they're 'bout gone now. The biggest one I ever see was ketched right across the river here. My Lord! he measured sixteen feet long and weighed five hundred or more. Well, sir, that was close to sixty years ago. My father bought a chunk of it—paid three cents a pound. I tasted it, and I know I've never wanted any sturgeon since. They're too oily for me.

"We used to have salmon in the river, but I ain't seen any lately. They don't like this water now. It's too slimy and dirty and foul, but there was a time when it was as nice, sweet water as you'd want to drink. Whaleships would come up here to git water to carry to sea. Now they might fill their oil casks if they distilled it a little. The power boats make filth, and so do the mills. Some of the best trout streams in the state have been spoiled by drainage from shops built along side. Trout don't mind sawmills, but they can't stand oil.

"Along 'bout 1880 the government stocked the river with salmon and they got to be quite plenty. We'd ketch 'em every night in our hauling seines, and people were crazy for 'em. They'd pay dollar and a quarter a pound for those caught the first of the season, and the price never went below forty cents. I've had my dinner, but I could eat a good big hunk of salmon right now. Shad can't commence the same year with it.

"I love to ketch black bass. Usually we troll for 'em. When you hook one he'll go to the bottom and then come up and jump out of the water. If he gits any slack line he'll jerk the hook out. Oh, they're spunky and fight like a steer. Some fellers caught a striped bass here in a seine net once that weighed ninety pounds, and they stuffed pebbles down his throat until they made him weigh a hundred.

"There used to be three hundred shad-hauling seines between here and Saybrook Bar. Now I don't know of one. A seine would reach clear across the river. The fishermen wouldn't go out without ketchin' one hundred and fifty or two hundred shad in them days. Once I see sixteen hundred drawn out. In that haul there was one shad which weighed nine and a half pounds. That's 'bout as large as they grow. I've heard of 'em weighin' twelve pounds, but darned if I believe it."

About this time Grumpy came loitering to where we sat on the piazza. "Is it hot this afternoon?" he asked; and when we replied in the affirmative he said, "That's

the way I feel, but I didn't know but 'twas the gin that's in me."

"I can hear a quail callin'," Harry remarked. "We don't have them very plenty now. Folks tell 'bout hard winters and foxes, but that's not what has cleaned 'em out. There's too many good guns and too many good dogs. I can remember when they'd come right into our yards and feed with the chickens and hens."

"A little quail is lively and clever just as soon as he's hatched," Grumpy affirmed. "He'll run off with a shuck on his tail, and if you undertake to reach for him he'll hide before you can get him."

"I saw a loon this morning," Harry said. "Every once in a while we ketch one that has got into our nets diving."

"You know when you get one all right," Grumpy commented. "He'll tell you all about it. They holler so you can hear 'em forty miles."

"Oh! they got an awful scream in 'em," Harry agreed. "I used to could mimic 'em. When we ketch one we make him fast in the boat and bring him on shore to have some fun. You have to be careful handling 'em. They got a bill as sharp as a needle. If they hit you they leave a sore every time. One night another feller and me took a loon to the upper landing where there was a young ladies' seminary. We had a muffler on him, but when we was on the green right in front of the school we slipped it off. He fetched 'bout

three yells, and if we didn't see ghosts up at them windows don't ask any questions!"

"I put a loon in old Gus Farley's fish box once," Grumpy said. "By and by Gus come to put his shad in the box, and as soon as he lifted the cover the loon commenced to holler, and Gus run. Gee whiz! you bet he did. Most any one would to hear that noise right in their face.

"Snapping turtles are another thing that make some excitement for us. We caught a big one night before last. He'd torn two or three holes in the net big enough to drive a horse and wagon through before we got him into the boat. His head was as large as my two fists, and he must have weighed thirty or forty pounds. We was soon sorry that we had him. He was raisin' the dickens in the boat, and after a while he got hold of the toe of my shoe. How that son of a gun did hang! I couldn't get loose until I run my jackknife into his jaw. I killed him and threw him overboard."

"You ought to have harnessed him and then he'd have stayed still," Harry said. "Put a cord through his mouth and tie it under his tail and you've got him. You could have sold him for good money. Turtles are fine eating. They got chicken meat and veal and all kinds of meat in 'em.

"Most every spring I find some of their eggs. They dig a hole a few inches deep in dry sand and lay thirty or forty eggs that they leave for the heat of the sun to hatch. The skunks dig the eggs out and eat 'em

quicker'n powder. When the little turtles hatch they're 'bout as big as a silver half dollar and blind as a bat. Their eyes ain't open more'n a kitten's, but they know the way to the water and start for it right off. The turtles crawl into spring holes and spend the winter 'bout a foot down in the mud, and fellers hunt for 'em and pull 'em out with something like a meathook fastened to a six foot handle. I caught nine that way once out of one spring hole, and I guess the smallest would weigh fifteen pounds."

"I think a carp struck our net last night," Grumpy observed. "Anyhow it made a thundering splash. I don't like the rascals."

"There's some terrible big ones in the river here," Harry commented. "They're a specie of sucker, and darn coarse grain and darn coarse tastin'. Oh! they're miserable eatin', but the Jews and Germans go for 'em like sin. I just as soon eat a piece of mud. They say the way to do with a carp is to dress it all up in good shape and stuff it with shavings and cook it; then throw away the carp and eat the shavings."

"They're a handsome fish just the same," Grumpy affirmed, "and they got a back on 'em like an ox. I saw one near my boat the other day that I should say weighed twenty-five pounds. He had his nose down and was rooting right along in the mud like a pig in a manure pile. The water was shallow and I reached down to ketch him. But he gave a plunge that very near upset the boat. You might as well attempt to

Shad time on the Connecticut

hold a horse as to hold a carp when he gets started. However, if I'd got my two hands under him I'd have h'isted him out all right. The last one we caught I sold to a bear of a Jew who lives across the river. He was bound to have it. 'But I got no money today,' he said. 'I pay you Saturday.'

"'If you don't I'll send Bill Russell, the sheriff after you,' I told him.

"How a carp will thump with his tail after you get him in your boat! If there's a little water in the bottom you'll think it's raining for a while. One night me'n' Hen, my partner, was on the spawning ground where it was against the law to be, and we caught a carp. He was a monster, and as soon as his tail got goin' you could hear him a mile. That wouldn't do, for we can't never tell when the fish officers will come around. Hen stepped on the carp to keep him still and almost got tipped overboard. Then we grabbed him and shoved him into the cubby at the bow. I thought he'd pound it to pieces, but he didn't make so much noise. We put out three ten-rod nets that night and got more than two hundred shad. They made such a load that the sides of the boat wasn't two inches out of water. We use pieces of old last year's net when we go fishin' up the cove where we're not supposed to go, so even if the fish warden ketches us and takes 'em away we wouldn't feel very bad."

"Well," Harry said, "the shad season will soon end, but I'm goin' to ketch enough afterward to salt down

half a barrel for my own use. The fishermen here, too, always make a drift on the third of July to git a shad to eat on the Fourth. A year ago I told the fish warden I was goin' to ketch a Fourth of July shad, and he said, "Well, by ginger! if one was hung on my door there'd be money comin' for it sometime.'

"He got his shad. I've seen 'em caught as late as the seventh of September, but they was hard lookin' subjects. After the shad have spawned they return to the sea. We ketch 'em on the back side of the net now. Farther down the river lots of fish are caught in pounds and fike nets. A law was passed against such fishing ten years ago, but soon afterward it was modified to allow the fishermen to wear out their nets, and those nets ain't worn out yet. They're like the Irishman's knife—it had had six new blades and two new handles, but he said it was the same knife his father used. The mesh of the nets is small, and they ketch lots of little shad six or eight inches long goin' down the river in the fall. Those little shad ain't good for anything but mackerel bait. It's a wonder that any shad git up here considering all the nets there are in the river down below, but they're sly and slippery, and if it wasn't for the pounds and fikes and the fishing on the spawning grounds there'd be as many as ever.

"The biggest mystery we have is little eels the length of your finger. For about a week the last of May there's a strip of 'em four or five feet wide going up the river near the shore on each side, and you can't turn 'em

down. They go along just as thick as they can swim, almost, and millions of them little fellers go by in a day. Every kind of fish swallow 'em. If they all matured you could walk across the river on eels."

One day I went back inland a few miles through the woods to the little manufacturing village of Moodus. It is in a hilly region which furnishes excellent water-power, and a dozen small factories dotted the irregular valleys. The mills are always running, and good times or bad times make no difference. Most of their owners live in the place, and chief among them is a man of whom a local resident said: "He wears a straw hat winter and summer. Sometimes, after a good nice shower, he'll take off his shoes and stockings and walk around. Well, I tell you it's healthy to get the feet aired out. If his help ask for more pay he'll say: 'Look how poor I am. I have to go barefoot same as you.' But he's worth at least half a million, and he ain't got chick nor child to spend his money. That man ain't goin' to the poorhouse very soon."

My visit to Moodus was made largely because of a peculiar fame it has for noises. Indeed, its original Indian name was Mackinmoodus, which means, the place of noises. Strange subterranean sounds commonly spoken of as "Moodus Noises" have been heard in the region from time immemorial. The town's first minister, writing in 1729 says: "As to earthquakes I have something considerable and awful to tell. Earthquakes have been here, and nowhere but in this precinct.

I have been informed that in this place, before the English settlements, the Indians drove a prodigious trade at worshipping the devil. Many years past an old Indian was asked the reason of the noises. He replied that the Indian's god was very angry because the Englishman's god was come here.

"There are no eruptions or explosions, but sounds and tremors which sometimes are very fearful. I have myself heard eight or ten sounds successively, imitating small arms, in the space of five minutes. I suppose I have heard several hundred of these within twenty years. Sometimes we have heard them almost every day. Oftentimes I have heard them coming down from the north imitating slow thunder, until the sound came near, and then there seemed to be a breaking, like the noise of a cannon shot, which shakes the houses and all that is in them."

A citizen of a century later declares that the shock given to a dwelling "is the same as the falling of logs on the floor," and that any earthquake felt in Connecticut was "far more violent here than in any other place." He says of one which occurred at ten o'clock in the night of May 18th, 1791: "Here the concussion of the earth, and the roaring of the atmosphere were most tremendous. Consternation and dread filled every house. Many chimneys were untopped and walls thrown down. It was a night to be remembered."

I inquired particularly about these noises of two men who were sitting on the post office piazza. "We still

have one once in a while," the older man said. "The ground shakes and there's a noise like a cannon going off or a rumblin' like thunder. It woke me up once in the night and the dishes were rattling on the buttery shelves. You remember old Hardy, don't you, Fred?"

"Yes," the younger man replied, "he gave me a horse-whipping one time when I was a boy."

"Well," the older man resumed, "he tells of being at work on the medder one day when the ground shook so strong that it brought the cattle down on their knees. The noises are made by gas and dead air exploding underground. They start a mile and a half from here on Cave Hill. Right in the side of that high hill there's a cave you can walk into for about forty rods. You can keep going until the air gets so stagnant that your light goes out. Then it's time for you to start back."

"We use to have quite a famous drum corps here," Fred remarked, "and some one made up a piece of poetry about that and the Moodus earthquake. The words were:

'A man from Texas tall and stout
Stuck up his nose and hollered out,
"Oh, what is that infernal noise?"
'Twas nothing but the Drum Corps boys.' "

In the evening when I returned to the riverside village the fishermen were bestirring themselves in preparation for the night's fishing, but there was much con-

templation and talking in proportion to action and accomplishment. The old men were smoking their pipes and the young men were puffing cigarets, and all were swearing good-naturedly with every breath. They piled the nets in the stern of the boats, put in tubs and lanterns, rubber boots and extra coats, and then rowed their boats one by one leisurely away down the river.

Harry and his grizzled partner were the last to leave. As the former stepped into their craft he said: "We'll go out as soon as the clouds git through showin' red. The gnats are bad tonight. Confound the little rascals! They git into your hair and eyes and ears. The mosquitoes, by gosh! are out too. One is buzzing around me now. I'll shoot him on the wing if he don't keep away," and the old man brought his hands together before his face with a sudden slap. "But there's nothing we have here to compare with the Spanish Flies down on the Amazon. Mosquitoes are nowhere. Bite —Jerusalem! don't say a word; and if you smash 'em they raise a blister on you. How plain you c'n hear them toads and frogs a-squawkin' in the meadow across the river! The frogs are the males, and the toads are the females. Well, we'll start now."

The boat slipped away through the dusk, and when I looked down the river the fishermen's lights dotted the gloomy water as far as I could see.

Notes.—One can travel on state macadam all the way down the valley from Hartford to Long Island Sound. Perhaps the most satisfying way to make the trip is by water in a motor boat. There

is much of interest in all the old towns along shore. Hartford is especially rich in attractions. The place was settled in 1635, and four years later the first colonial constitution was written for this Connecticut colony. A tablet marks the site of the Charter Oak in the hollow of which the document was hidden in 1687 to save it from being seized by the English. Nearly a century later it served as the model for the United States Constitution. The Charter Oak was thirty-three feet in circumference when it was blown down in 1856. The tombstone of General Putnam can be seen in the capitol, and there hangs in the senate chamber the celebrated Stuart portrait of Washington, bought by the state in 1800 for less than eight hundred dollars. Hartford was for many years the residence of Harriet Beecher Stowe and of Mark Twain.

XV

GLIMPSES OF LIFE

IN this chapter I have gathered together certain fragments that touch on various picturesque, typical, or humorous phases of New England life. Some of them are mere anecdotes, and some are comparatively long narratives of travel experiences, but none of them fit naturally into the other chapters.

It was midsummer. The day was hot and muggy. I was walking among the hills. There were workers in the hayfields. Boys were swimming in the ponds and in the deep pools of the streams. Most of the wayside homes were slicked up for summer boarders, and the boarders themselves in their semi-rural, keep-cool costumes were lolling about on piazzas and under the shade trees and loitering along the highways and rowing on the lakes.

I stopped at a village store and sat down to rest. Presently a young chap came in and bought from the clerk fifty cents' worth of sugar, a package of fine-cut tobacco, and a little candy. He soon left, but shortly afterward returned accompanied by his father, mother, and sister. The man spoke angrily to the clerk, saying: "I sent here for ten pounds of sugar, and the package

After dandelion greens

my boy brought back was so small I weighed it. There was only eight pounds."

"That was fifty cents' worth—just what your son asked for," the clerk responded.

"But I sent money for ten pounds," the man declared, and then turned to the boy and said, "You paid it to him, didn't you, Charlie?"

"Ye-es," the youngster mumbled with averted eyes.

The father again glared at the clerk and said: "You got the money. Why didn't you put up the ten pounds of sugar?"

"I been workin' in this store three years," was the clerk's response, "and I know the difference between ten pounds of sugar and fifty cents' worth as well as any one, and I tell you I gave your boy just what he asked for. He said he wanted fifty cents' worth, and a bag of Little Hatchet Tobacco, and the rest in chocolates."

"That's a likely story!" the man exclaimed. "Charlie don't use tobacco."

"I don't care anything about that," was the clerk's comment. "He asked for it, and it aint the first tobacco he's got here either."

"Now, Charlie, don't you tell no lie," his sister cautioned. She was red-headed and keen-witted. "Did you get that tobacco, and are you makin' cigarets on the sly?"

Charlie's head sank lower, and his hesitating affirmative was scarcely audible.

"Well, well, we'll see about this," the father said. He blew his nose violently and then shuffled out of the store with his family following, and I watched them as they walked dejectedly up the elm-shadowed street toward their home.

The next day I was in a town which is a favorite resort of rich city people and there I hired a liveryman to take me out into the surrounding country that I might see some of the fine estates of the millionaires who have dotted the region with their summer palaces. As we passed one of the mansions my companion said: "The man who lives there sent a horse to town one day to be auctioned. He said the horse was all right, and I bought him, but on the way home it ran away with me. I drove back to the auction stable and told the auctioneer what had happened. 'Of course you can return the horse,' he said. 'I don't know what the man could mean by guaranteeing an animal like that.'

"The morning afterward the owner met me at the post office. 'Well, Dowd,' he said, 'you've ruined your reputation as a horseman, going back on a bargain the way you did.'

"'And you've ruined your reputation as an honest man, if you ever had one,' I told him.

"'Don't you talk like that to me,' he growled.

"I went out, and he soon followed and overtook me on the sidewalk. 'You mustn't speak to me again in a public place the way you did in the post office,' he said.

Getting in hay

" 'Where do you want me to speak to you like that—in some cellar?' I asked.

" 'You mustn't at all!' he exclaimed.

" 'Very well,' I said, 'then don't have anything to say to me, you lying rascal!'

" 'What!' he cried, growing red in the face, 'you, a common stableman, speaking like that to me, a gentleman! I won't stand it!'

"He made a rush and struck at me with his fist, but I dodged and then got in a blow myself that carried him off his feet. However, he was quickly up and rushed again to the attack. That time he got a black eye.

" 'What sort of a country is this,' he shouted, 'that allows a stableman to strike a gentleman? Don't you do so any more!'

" 'Then keep your hand down,' I told him.

"He saw that he was no match for me, and he turned away muttering vengeance. But he never did anything. When we meet I look at him squarely, but he turns away his face."

The winter had been an unusually snowy one, and the spring was backward. But at length the snow melted, the grass thrust up valiant spears of green, the tree buds put off their armor, the roads dried, and I started on a buckboard journey to the hill country. No sooner, however, did I leave the lowlands than I began to encounter mud, and as I went higher I found shreds of the winter's snowy garments.

The sun had set and the gloom of night was deepening when I stopped at a farmhouse to apply for shelter. I went to the barn where a stable door was open. Within was pitchy darkness, but I could discern the sound of milk streaming into a pail and I ventured a salutation and got a reply. It was soon arranged that I should stay for the night, and when my horse had been made comfortable the farmer led the way to the house. The family sat down to supper, and after the man had asked a long blessing we fell to eating the fried ham and potato and hot biscuits with an accompaniment of delicious maple syrup made on the place. Finally there was pie. The man polished his plate with his knife in the time-honored rustic fashion. When his wife spoke of him to any one else she called him "he." They both had high-keyed, gentle nasal voices. After supper I joined the family and two cats and two dogs around the briskly burning fire in the kitchen stove and chatted away the evening.

I was awakened the following morning by a lone bird that was carolling near my window. When I was again on the road the sun shone clear in the east, but the air was keen, the ground was frozen stiff, and the snow was hard enough to walk on. Noon came and I stopped for dinner at a shabby little home on a mountain top. It had broken windows stuffed with rags, the food that was served was poor, and the milk tasted of the barnyard.

Presently I resumed my journey. The rough descend-

ing way was crossed by many thank-you-ma'ams and in places was so icy that the horse sat down and slid. There were drifts too. Some were five or six feet deep and I should have been shipwrecked in them if a passage had not been opened by shovellers. The natives calculated that the last of them would not disappear before June.

In the midst of one of the drifts the road made so sharp a turn that I stopped to consider the situation, and the horse took advantage of the opportunity to go to sleep. Finally I got out, lifted around the back end of the vehicle, and went on. Soon I found that the trail led me from the drifted highway into a pasture waste of soggy moss through which many wheels had ploughed a wide track of deep, sticky mud. At times I thought I was going to be engulfed, and then I tried the mossy borders, but there, though the wheels cut in less deeply, the vehicle pitched about so over the hillocks that I was glad to get back into the slough.

Among the places that I passed through on this trip were Scrabbletown, Fog Hill, Larrywog, and Podunk. As to the last an Indian named Dunk once fell off a bridge there in the early days and was drowned. The whites spoke of him as "Poor Dunk," and the bridge as "Poor Dunk's Bridge," and so the vicinity in time came to be called Podunk. Then there was Pilfershire, so named because a certain set of fellows there was not above stealing, and it was a common saying that everybody who passed through lost something. Gradually

the local dwellers reformed, but the name stuck, much to their sorrow, until, in desperation, they painted a big rock near the highway red and called the village Red Rock.

One morning I started to climb what was known as "the Notch Road" that led far up a mountain, but rain began to fall, and when I came out on an exposed hill the wind made my umbrella flap and snap, and the rain swept past in sheets. I hastened the horse, and when I arrived at a group of farm buildings I drove under a shed. Then I went to the house, but before I could rap at the door a kind old lady opened it and said, "Come right in out of this dreadful storm."

She made me very comfortable by the kitchen stove and brought a pan of apples from the cellar with which to regale me. The room was rather primitive. Its floor was much worn, and there were wide cracks between the boards. The lower half of the walls was sheathed, and the upper half was unpapered plaster, a good deal broken. The ceiling was very grimy. Hooks along the walls served for hanging up towels, a variety of clothing, and a mop. My hostess wore a big hood on her head and a cape over her shoulders. Presently she sat down in a chair by the stove and churned in a tall earthen jar with an up and down paddle. Every time the paddle went down bits of cream leaped out till the floor around was plentifully decorated.

After the butter came she went to a window, wiped a place on the misted glass, and peered out. "I'm

On the border of the lake

expecting my son," she said. "He's a milkman. He has to be up at five every morning, and it's a slave's life. Some people here on the mounting ship their milk to Bostown. Yas, a good many doos that way, but for years we've drawed ourn to Millville and peddled it. You've been to Millville, haven't ye? It's no great of a place, but we have a stiddy market there for milk and whatever we raise. Lord! I didn't think this 'ere rain would last so long. A branch has blowed off the ellum tree yender in the yard. We been having very cold sour weather all the spring, and week afore last we had a terrible storm of wind and snow. It come on in the night. I heared the blinds slamming and got up and fastened 'em. I was scairt, and the house rocked so I didn't care much about goin' to bed ag'in. That there was the worst storm I ever see. I won't forgit it very soon."

Her son came a little later, and we sat down to eat dinner. "How'd you make out today?" the old woman said to the milkman.

"Well," he responded, "I'd just got to the narrer place in the road in the holler beyond the bridge when that mare all to once took a notion to cut up a shine. I swan! she'll kick the stars right out of the sky. I been trainin' the critter ever since she was a colt, but she aint never learnt nothin' yet. I had a good holt of the lines or she'd have busted up the cart."

"Just think of that now!" the old woman remarked to me.

"While the mare was rampagin', along come Bill

Case," the son resumed. He'd been to pastur' with his cows, and he stopped and said, ' 'Pears to me you'd better git a new horse.'

" 'That's a good idee,' I told him, 'but supposin' a feller ain't got the spondulux to pay for't?' Let me have another of those b'iled potatoes. I'm considerable hungry. I bruised my foot some, and I guess I'd better rub on a little alcohol."

"I've got a bottle of it somewheres," his mother said, "and I'll fetch it and put some in a sasser for you. But don't rub on too much or it'll take the hide right off."

After we finished eating, and the bruised foot had been attended to, the milkman said to me: "Now I'll rig up and go to the barn. I've got a game rooster out there I'd like to show you."

His mother turned to me and observed: "It's curi's how much he thinks of that there rooster of hisn. But boys all have to have the hen fever just as children all have to have croup and measles."

"That's what's the matter," her son commented. "Us young ones are a little bit sp'ilt when it comes to chickens and game roosters. But I think there's money into the hen business."

"Before you go out," the old woman said, "I want you to fix the bedroom door so it will stay shut, and I wish some time you'd clean out the chimley."

The son got a hammer and gave the door catch a few bangs, and then we went to the barn where he

One of the old folks at home

showed me his hens. "Some on 'em are about as handsome birds as you could find," he affirmed. "There's the rooster I was tellin' you about. He was raised on my sister's place, but her and her husband didn't care much for so fancy a breed, and they let me have him."

While I was enjoying the attractions of the barn the weather took a turn for the better and the rain ceased falling. Yet the valleys continued misty, the mountain tops were hidden by clouds, and the wind rattled and surged around unceasingly. It was four o'clock in the afternoon. I would gladly have lodged with the milkman that night, but could not because all the extra bedticks were in the wash. However, he was sure I could get kept at the second house up the road toward the notch.

I drove on until I came to the house that had been recommended. A man was sawing wood by the roadside. He said: "I'd be glad to keep you if I had a place for your horse. I'm awfully sorry, but I've got the barn floor torn up. There are three brothers who live up the road—mighty nice folks too. I know very well you can get kept there."

I went on. At the home of the three brothers two of them came out on the piazza in response to my knock. But their buildings were full of stock, and they had put four cosset sheep in the woodshed because they had no other place for them. "There's just one more house up the road," they said. "You try there and if they say 'No,' come back here and we'll take care of you

somehow even if we have to keep your horse in the parlor."

I wended my way upward and two dogs followed me barking savagely until they heard a hound baying on the mountain. Then they stopped and gave their attention to him. The people at the final house up among the fog-veiled heights gave me the shelter I had so long sought, and when morning came, breezy and sunlit, and I looked out and saw how charming the spot was with its wild mountain environment I felt sufficiently rewarded for my strenuous experiences of the previous day.

I once had occasion to spend some time in a good-sized market-town where I boarded with the Dawsons. The family consisted of Mr. Dawson, a frank and capable man of middle age, his wife, fat and, as a rule, amiable, with a liking for assuming little airs of propriety, surprise, sorrow, and other emotions, and a son, Julian, aged fifteen, who resembled his mother in his appearance and characteristics except that he had none of her sentimentality.

Mrs. Dawson was quite religious when she happened to think of it. In commenting on the use of tobacco she declared that it was bad for the stomach and added affectingly, "We are abusing the gift our Heavenly Father has given us." The gift referred to was the stomach, not the tobacco.

She taught in the Baptist Sunday-school, and she

was cocksure that her particular brand of religion had all the right and sense there was. As to the Unitarians she said: "They don't have prayer-meetings. Ah! they think they can gain heaven without working for it, but I don't believe in this lolling into heaven on a hammock, and I don't take any stock in their idea that we shall all be saved in the end. If that was so what is the use of trying to be good when it don't make any difference? People ask me if I could be satisfied in the next world if my husband shouldn't be saved. 'Perfectly, perfectly!' I tell 'em. I'd know that whatever had been done was just. He'd had every opportunity here to see the light and be a good Christian, and if he hadn't done well it was his own fault."

One evening we all got ready to go to the church to a Harvest Festival. Julian was to go early and act as usher, but he was "sassy" to his mother, and his father sternly told him he would take that sort of nonsense out of him, and he might just sit down and wait for the rest of us. He pouted and swaggered, threw off his hat, his coat, and his cuffs, flounced into a chair, and picked up a book which he pretended to read. When we were ready he announced that he was not going, and a dispute ensued with his father during which Mrs. Dawson preserved the air of a long-suffering parent. Julian finally lagged along behind and was marched into the family pew.

After the meeting, as I was walking home, Mrs. Dawson asked me if I wore false teeth. I think she

was not much interested to know whether I did or not, but was making an opportunity to tell the story of her own, which she did at considerable length. Just as she concluded she observed a shooting star and said: "When I was a little girl I used to believe that if I saw a shooting star and made a wish without speaking to any one of it afterward that wish would come true. I don't know but it's foolish; and yet I sometimes try that even now."

On one occasion she overheard Julian remark, " 'Taint no use."

"How you talk!" she exclaimed, much scandalized. "There's no such word in the English language as 'taint." Then addressing me she added, "I do wish I could learn my boy to talk as if he'd been to school." She turned again to Julian and said, "I want you to go to the post office, and don't you make no stop for nobody on the way."

He was often a great trial to her, and so was her husband. If she and Mr. Dawson both had a hand in doing a thing that went wrong she promptly packed all the blame on him, and she often told him that their affairs would be in a very bad way if it wasn't for her. It was her firm belief that she had a monopoly of all the virtues and she could not understand his irritation at her attitude of saintly patience toward his failings.

Once there was a stair carpet to be put down. Mr. Dawson spent an hour or two at the job, but when the carpet was down his wife found he had stretched it a

little tighter than before so that on the bottom stair a crease showed somewhat out of place. She made a series of unpleasant remarks on his stupidity and lacks in general, and nothing would do but that carpet must be put down anew. So Mr. Dawson took it up and started the task again. But this time he would not drive a single tack until Mrs. Dawson had indicated the place for it. At each step he wanted to have her adjust the carpet to suit herself, and she found the labor quite wearing. To cap the climax, when they got to the bottom, the carpet hung three inches short of the floor. Mr. Dawson wouldn't do the work over again, and there the carpet hung—a grand object lesson.

A man in a remote country town, attracted by the celebrity of William Cullen Bryant, came to see him at his summer home in Cummington, Massachusetts. After meeting and talking with him his awe gradually wore off, and he said, "Why, I don't see that you look any different from other men; and yet I s'pose some people would give as much to see you as they would to see a bear."

When old Doctor Hillman called on a patient and left some medicine he'd say: "If the dose I've prescribed doesn't have any effect take a double dose. Then you'll either be better or worse, or you'll be about the same."

"Everybody had a nickname when I went to school. There was Codfish, and Boots, and Old Grimes, and we called Dave Kingman, whose father was a deacon, 'Little Deacon.' One of the girls, who afterward became a famous writer, we called Tabby.

"We had a fireplace in the schoolhouse until about 1870. If the supply of wood give out the boys would go into the woodland close by and knock some stumps to pieces and bring 'em in. There was considerable complaint of a poor fire, and one examination day at the end of the winter term the boys said they would make it hot enough for once. So they filled up the fireplace and chimney to the top. A person couldn't stay within ten feet of that fire, and we had to keep putting on snow around the chimney to prevent the building from burning down.

"I went to school in the Slab City district. There was a good-sized brook near the schoolhouse, and we skated and slid on it in winter and paddled in it and made rafts to float around on in summer, and we were always breaking through the ice or tumbling into the water. The nearest district to ours was one we called 'Babylon.' A lot of overgrown fellers went to the school there, and they turned out their teacher—picked him up and set him and all his traps outdoors. After that they come up and offered to turn ourn out. He wa'n't good for nothin', but we didn't propose to have any outsiders interfering. So we pitched in and give those Babylon fellers the worst drubbing they ever got

and drove 'em way down over a ridge that was known as 'the Backbone.'

"Our teacher was kind of an ugly cud. He had a curious way of taking the kinks out of the little runts. He'd grab 'em by the collars and crack their heads together. How he would yank 'em round!

"One recess I got into trouble with Josh Harris. He was always forever tryin' to trip up some one, and he tried it on me. That kind o' raised my Ebenezer a little. We went at each other, and the teacher come to the door, and says: 'Stop thar, both of ye! Who begun this row?'

" 'Josh did,' says I.

"But Josh started makin' complaints of me, and the teacher says, 'Yew two come into the schoolhouse.'

"We went in, and he gave us each a switch and told us to lick jackets. Josh blinked at me to have me hit easy, but I wouldn't. After school I felt the welts on his legs, and they stood right up just like a washboard.

"I shall never forget one thing I heard at that school. The teacher asked in the geography lesson, 'What are the principal fruits of the West Indies?'

" 'Pie-apples and bandages,' one of the boys says."

"We always used to take *Harper's Weekly*. A crazy man lived in our family, and he'd read that *Harper's Weekly* and look at the pictures and seem to get a great deal of comfort out of it. But we stopped it because it

began to caricature Charles Sumner. The crazy man didn't live long after that."

"It ain't much trouble for me to take care of my family," the hired man said. "I git 'em all under cover every time I put on my hat."

"One day Uncle Quin was going to town and Jerry Peters asked him to bring back a bottle of rum for him. Uncle Quin, he got the rum, and when he came home he set it in his cellar-way right side of a bottle of kerosene. By and by Jerry come after the rum and Uncle Quin give him the wrong bottle and Jerry took it home. Later Uncle Quin discovered his mistake. He was afraid the kerosene would poison any one who drank it, and he was scairt most to death. So he hitched up his horse and put him right through till he got to Jerry's house. Jerry had taken a good horn of the kerosene, and he was in bed, but declared he was all right enough.

"'Wal, I swear to ye!' Uncle Quin says, much relieved, 'now, if ye'll only swallow a wick ye'll have a lamp all complete.'"

"Parson Briggs was a little stub of a fellow, but he had long legs that opened up like a pair of tongs almost to his brain. He's gone to heaven now. A grandson of his is in Amherst College. I don't know where he'll go to."

"Harry Taylor has got to be quite a smoker for a young fellow. I met him the other evening on the

road, and he had a pipe in his mouth with a bowl as big as a cocoanut. It was so large it hid his face and I didn't know what was coming at first. A cloud of smoke poured out and streamed away behind, and he looked like some sort of steam engine running loose."

"I think a man ought to marry a woman that is cheerful and can talk easy and joke and say pleasant things to him. There ain't much fun in coming in after a hard day outdoors and meeting a woman with a face like a hoe-handle, who goes about her work as if she'd lost all her friends."

Printed in the United States of America.

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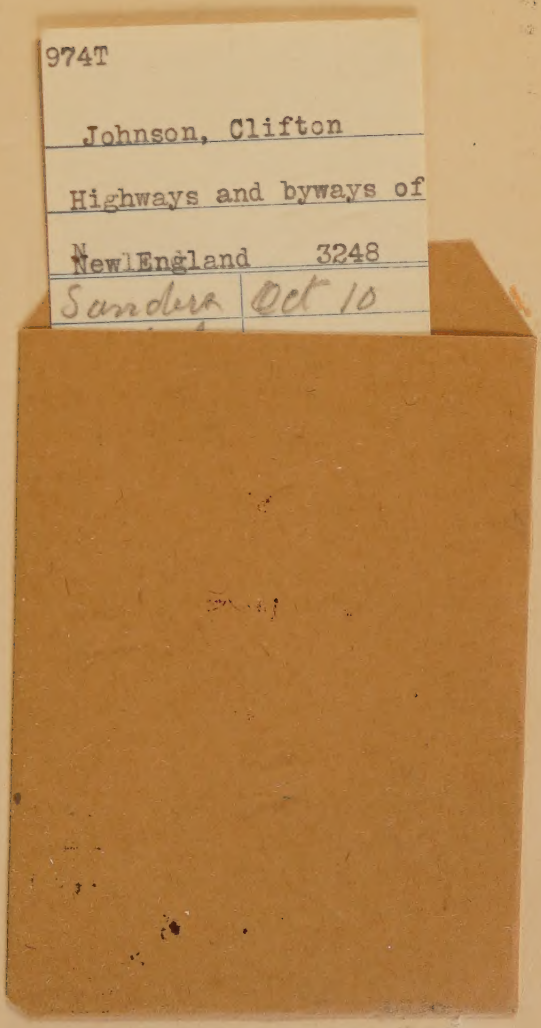
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